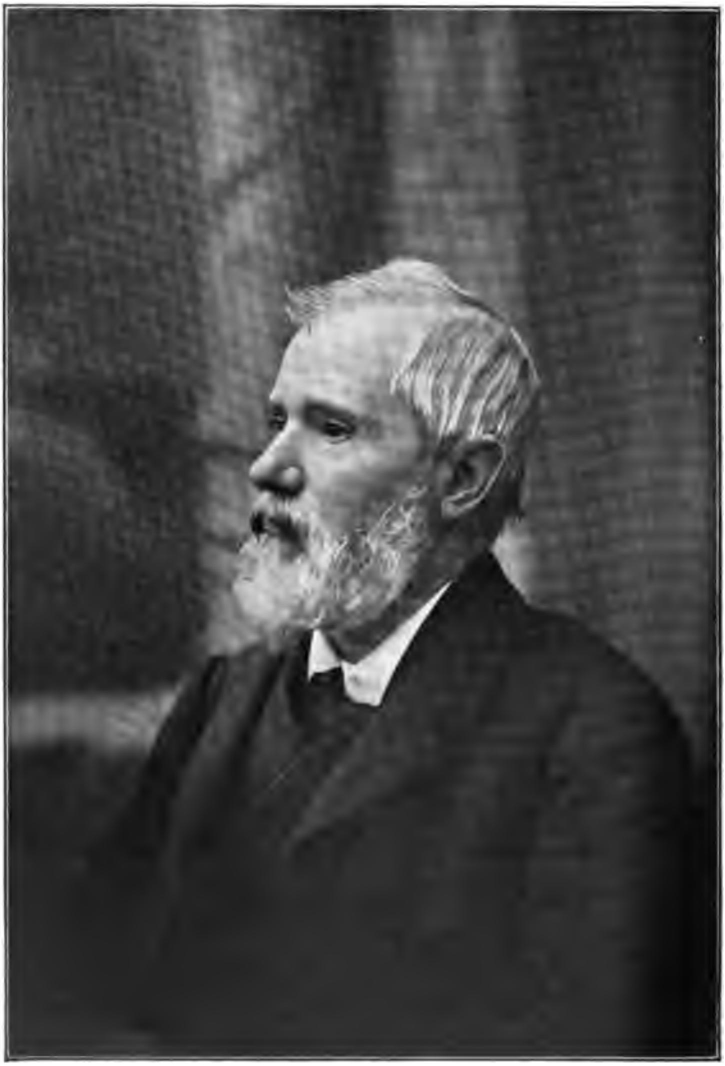


JOSEPH COWEN.

JOSEPH COWEN'S SPEECHES ON THE NEAR EASTERN QUESTION: FOREIGN AND IMPERIAL AFFAIRS: AND ON THE BRITISH EMPIRE :: ::

REVISED BY HIS DAUGHTER

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PREFACE.

The speeches collected in this volume deal mostly with the Foreign and world-wide Policy of England, and extend over a period of twenty-one years (1876-1897). Some have been reprinted in Major Jones's work, *Life and Speeches of Joseph Cowen*, others in a little book, *Election Speeches*, issued by Mr. Andrew Reid; the remainder, until now, have lain buried in the files of the daily papers. Later on a biography, and complete edition of Joseph Cowen's speeches, will appear.

From his youth, Mr. Cowen made a special study of the Eastern Question, and the opinions he then formed never changed. What he said of the Reform Movement in Turkey, thirty years ago, reads as if it were spoken to-day. He understood and sympathised with the aspirations of the Turkish Reformers—the forerunners of "the Young Turks," and pleaded their cause. He believed "that beyond the sumptuous palaces on the Bosphorus, and outside the gathering grounds of the Bashi-Bazouks" there was a nation. His views on the external affairs of the Empire are well known. He was "an adherent of an European and national as against an insular and parochial policy," and he "was an Englishman before he was political partisan." The volume opens with a speech delivered in the autumn of 1876, when the speaker was at the zenith of his vigorous manhood; it closes with his letter of farewell to the young soldiers leaving for the South African War—his last message. He wrote it when stricken by the illness that had only one ending—death. Further introduction is unnecessary. The name of the book in itself is a preface.

JANE COWEN.

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I.—THE BULGARIAN ATROCITIES.

OPEN-AIR MEETING ON THE SUMMER HOUSE HILL, BLAYDON-ON-TYNE, SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1876.

It is not an agreeable thing to talk on a bleak hill side on a cold evening. You who are listeners will feel the discomfort greater than I do. The agitation that has sprung up on the Eastern Question in this country has astonished politicians and been honourable to the people. On the last working day of the session I left the House of Commons in company with two gentlemen, both men who have had considerable experience in public life. One had been a member of Mr. Gladstone's Administration; the other held office in the present Government. Discussing the result of our six months' labours at Westminster, they arrived at the conclusion that the session had been singularly dull, unexciting, and laborious; that political life was at a low ebb in Parliament, and all but extinct in the country; and that the Government, in August, so far as the House of Commons was concerned, was stronger than it was in February. In that opinion, expressed by men of greater age and experience than I was, I entirely concurred. We parted under the impression that we would have as uneventful a recess as we had had a session. One of my companions went to seek quiet and rest in the Scottish hills. The other sought for the same requisites in presence of the melancholy ocean on the west coast of Africa. I betook myself to the north-east corner of France, and there, in an obscure corner amidst the Vosges mountains, I tried to get as far away from railways and newspapers and public meetings as I was able.

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But even to these distant retreats, the reverberation of the agitation that was moving England to its centre reached. Hastening home, I met in London a few days ago one of the gentlemen I have just referred to, and remembering our conversation five or six weeks since, we could not help but be struck with the change that had taken place since we parted. Then there was not a breath of political agitation stirring the surface of our national life. Now the country is convulsed from one end to the other by a movement as grave, as earnest, and, I believe, as spontaneous as we have seen in this generation. I know of no movement that we have had in England like it since that generous expression of national sympathy that went forth five-and-forty years ago for the struggling and the suffering Poles in their gallant effort for freedom. Continental politicians are unable to understand this action. They are accustomed to say that whenever England moves on foreign questions, she has some selfish interest in doing so. Able Continental writers attempt to account for this demonstration on sectarian grounds. The number of bishops and clergymen that have engaged, to their honour be it said, in it, have led them to believe that it is sympathy for the Christian against the Mohammedan. Others find the source of this movement in financial considerations, and they say that the feeling against the Turk has arisen only as soon as he became insolvent. I do not believe these are correct statements of the origin of this national uprising. We sympathise with the Bulgarians not because they are Christians but because they are men. And however some of the wealthier sections of the community may be moved to activity against the Mussulman in consequence of the non-fulfilment of their commercial engagements, I am satisfied that the mass of the people are little concerned about the payment or non-payment of interest on the Turkish bonds. But persons in this country,

men that are living in our midst, have also been strangely in error in accounting for this popular fervour. Our own Government have failed to grasp its depth, its force, its intensity. I have no wish to speak hardly of political opponents. And although I may differ from some of my friends here, I am bound to say that I do not altogether endorse some of the very severe criticisms that have been passed upon the Prime Minister of this country. I am no supporter of Mr. Disraeli, and never was, but I never like to do an antagonist, especially when he is driven to the wall, even an apparent injustice. I heard every speech by Mr. Disraeli in Parliament on this question last session. I may almost say I have heard every sentence he uttered, and I feel bound to add, in all fairness, that I do not believe that he meant to treat this subject with frivolity or indifference. I am speaking of his intention. Mr. Disraeli is such a supreme master of words that he can coin smart phrases and make fantastic comparisons so easily that even in his soberest moods he talks in epigrams. Sometimes, too, his fertile imagination runs away with, I do not say his reason, but with his judgment. In the House of Commons Mr. Disraeli has some very warm but not very discreet admirers, and they laugh and applaud at almost everything he says, but with little discretion and small judgment. I believe that he meant to treat this question gravely, and that the phrases he uttered did not convey the meaning to his mind that they have conveyed to others, and if it had not been for some of his unwise friends, who raised an ill-timed laugh, we would not have heard so much bitter comment. I would make no man an offender for a word. I have been too long engaged in public affairs not to know how unfair it is to pick out from any man's speech a phrase here or a sentence there, and endeavour to put an adverse interpretation upon it. I am willing, therefore, to give full weight to Mr. Disraeli's intellectual idiosyn-

crasies, and to believe that he did not mean to convey the impression that the unfortunate sentences referred to have left on the minds of many. We should recollect that the members of the Ministry are Englishmen. They have human feelings in common with ourselves. I know some of them to be warm hearted and generous men; political opponents I admit, but still men personally for whom I have the highest respect. While, however, I say this much to qualify the somewhat harsh personal criticism that has been passed upon them in almost every meeting which has been held, I must add this, that I think the members of the Government have entirely failed to appreciate the force and power and earnestness of the national sentiment represented by these meetings. We will not select a solitary sentence, we will not take a single phrase, but we will take the general scope and spirit of their speeches, and judge them, not in an hypercritical, but in a fair and manly sense.

Take the speech of Mr. Disraeli, or Lord Beaconsfield, whichever you choose to call him, though he will be longer, better, and more honourably known by his own name than by that other title which he has, I think, foolishly adopted. In the address he delivered at Aylesbury, he spoke in terms of unnecessary harshness and acerbity of the Servians. I am satisfied that in these expressions he did not give utterance to the feelings of the English people. The Servians are fighting for the freedom of their race and country, and they are worthy the sympathy and support of all lovers of liberty. The cause in which they are engaged is one for which the best and noblest of Englishmen have many times fought and perished. Every political privilege we now enjoy has been hardly fought for by our forefathers, and the citizens of free England should not deal harshly or speak unkindly, of a people that are struggling for the national rights that

we now enjoy, which we prize so highly and, so justly, boast of. The Servians, too, are engaged in a work that we have often expressed our approval of when undertaken by other nations. We sympathised with the Greeks, with the Poles, with the Hungarians, with the Italians in their heroic struggles for independence. Why should we not extend the like succour to the Servians when battling for like objects? There have been considerations, I know, that have prevented the growth of the same intense feeling in this country for the Servian cause that was awakened for Italy and for Poland. But still, the fight in each country was the same; and an English Minister does not speak the sentiment of the mass of his countrymen that sneer at their efforts or disparages their exertions. Again, Lord Beaconsfield told us that the Servians had been driven into this war by conspiracies promoted by secret societies. Mr. Disraeli always has had hazy fears of conspiracy running through his brain. He has expatiated upon the mysteries of conspiracy for so many years that he meets it at every turn. It is only despotic monarchs that are, or ought to be, afraid of conspiracies. I make bold to say that there never was a war commenced that was so thoroughly the result of the popular wish, as the war now waged in Servia. I know gentlemen who were in Servia previous to the breaking out of hostilities, others who were there when the war commenced, and they have assured me—they had the very best means of knowing, being familiar with the people, and having friends amongst the Ministers and the military leaders—that if Prince Milan had not led his army against the Turks at the time he did, he would inevitably have been deposed. And this Servian fervour is natural. Servia borders on Bosnia and Bulgaria. The poor refugees from Turkish misrule and tyranny had swarmed across the boundary lines of the two provinces. They had carried the burden of their many woes to their

brothers in blood and race. It was reasonable and only human that the Servian people, after they had heard of the atrocities, the recital of which had sent a thrill of horror through the civilised world, could not be restrained in their resolve to carry succour and help to people bound to them by ties of neighbourhood and religion. I repeat it was natural for the Servians so to act. I at least will never shrink from expressing the highest regard and esteem for the patriotism and self sacrifice with which these hardy Slavs have thrown themselves into this war for emancipation.

Sir Stafford Northcote tells us that we do not understand foreign politics. Well, Sir Stafford Northcote is a mild-spoken, conscientious, and well-meaning man, but I think he was altogether in error in making this statement. If Sir Stafford meant that the masses of the British people were ill-informed on the ordinary details of diplomacy, he was right. We do not know the doings of our Government generally in diplomacy. The details of our arrangements with foreign powers Parliament does not know. That is one of the evils of our present system. In America they manage their foreign negotiations upon a better plan than we do. Our Governments carry on negotiations with foreign States secretly, and neither Parliament nor the people know of the proceedings until they find themselves committed to a course of action they may or may not approve of. In so far Sir Stafford Northcote is right, but in the broader sense he is wrong. I appeal to any man who is familiar with recent political history if it is not the fact that whenever a broad issue on foreign questions has been put before the British people, the people have not been right and the rulers have not been wrong? What was the case in the American struggle? Is it not the case that all our Whig and Tory rulers, the governing classes generally in the country, not only sympathised with the

South, but they one and all predicted that she would be successful. The people, however, not only had faith in the Northern cause, but they had judgment sufficient to see that it, being the cause of justice and of right, must triumph. Take, for example again, the effort of the Italians to win independence and unity for their country. I am familiar with the English agitation on that question, and I know this, that the English ruling classes of both parties were opposed to it. Again and again they resisted and threw the weight of England's influence into the scale of Italy's oppressors, but when the friends of Italy had created a public opinion in her favour, and the Italians themselves were vigorous enough by their own strong arm to free themselves from their oppressors, then our ruling classes, as they usually do, swam with the current. The mass of Englishmen, swayed only by their love of liberty, gave their sympathy to the Italians before they saw them successful. Events showed that they had on that subject greater political insight than their rulers, infinitely greater than the men who now constitute the Government, who, when in office in the great campaigns in 1859, threw every influence in their power to the side of the petty despots in the Italian peninsula. On these grounds I hold that the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not correct, and that when broad political issues are put before the nation, the people have usually been right and the Governments wrong.

We have been often reminded in these discussions, not only by leading statesmen, but by the usual supporters of the Government, that the atrocities that have been perpetrated in Bulgaria are in no way different to what have been perpetrated by other nations in different periods of history. That is quite true. We have all both sinned and suffered. There is not a nation in the world which is guiltless. We know quite well of the massacres of Scio, and of Syria,

of Glencoe, and of Jamaica. We are familiar with the details of these sad scenes, and so because England participated in them, we don't fear to say we are ashamed. We blew Sepoys from the cannon's mouth in India; the French smoked Arabs to death in Algerian caves; and the Americans have not been either merciful or just towards the Red Indian. But when these adherents of the Ministry refer to these regrettable occurrences what purpose have they to serve? The object of their reciting the record of other nations' shortcomings has been to mitigate the force of the accusation against the Turkish Government, and to weaken the strength of the terrible indictment which is preferred against their rule. We are now dealing with the present, not with the past. We are crying out against a recent and great outrage upon humanity by the emissaries of a Government that is at once our ally and protégé, and we will not have aroused popular feeling turned off the scent by any red herring being drawn across the trail. I have no wish to harrow up your feelings by an unnecessary recital of the brutalities that we are all familiar with; but there is one occurrence that I have been made acquainted with that has not, as far as I know, been made public, and as it exemplifies the character of our cherished allies, it may not be out of place to recite the details. There existed, in a quiet valley on the Balkan Mountains, in the spring of this year, a homestead, from all appearance the abode of plenty and of comfort. In that household there lived a Bulgarian farmer and his wife, both well advanced in life. They had three sons, two of them grown to manhood, and two daughters. One of the sons was married, and he had some young children. These peaceful and inoffensive agriculturists were apparently in the enjoyment of a full measure of earth's comforts. On a pleasant May evening their home was surrounded by a band of irregular Turkish troops. Everything they had that was

valuable and moveable was immediately seized. The women of the family then had committed upon them, in the presence of the male members, unnameable crimes. These foul deeds accomplished, the men were killed, and their bodies torn limb from limb. A large fire was lit, and the mangled remains of these poor Bulgarians were first deliberately cooked, and then offered as a hideous repast to the female members of the family. Stupefied by these deeds, the women, after being again outraged, were also murdered, and the house set in flames, the cattle and all moveable property being carried away by these fiends in human shape. Such creatures are not men, but tigers in shape of men. They danced and sang in savage fury as they left the burning remains. And it is the employers and abettors of such human tigers that we are to support! This occurred within a few miles of the Servian frontier; and we are to speak harshly of the Servians for flying to the succour of their fellows! I ask you to realise the situation for a moment to make the Servian position your own. Suppose a Mahommedan or any other Government had ruled in London, and such atrocities had taken place at its instance in Yorkshire, do you think any power on earth could have withheld the people of Northumberland and Durham from rushing to the aid of their neighbours? I have been told by a gentleman who has visited some of the scenes of the barbarities in Bulgaria that the most painful and revolting spectacles he witnessed was the way in which the dead bodies lay about unburied. The dogs were the only scavengers. In some places the earth was merely scratched up and corpses barely covered. The dogs remove the earth and fight over the mangled remains. A gentleman who has been recently in Bulgaria says that some of the villages realise, and even surpass, that terrible scene recounted in the " Siege of Corinth "—

> And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
> Hold o'er the dead their carnival—

Gorging and growling o'er carcase and limb,
They were too busy to bark at him.
From a Tartar's skull they had stripped the flesh,—
As ye peel the fig when the fruit is fresh,
And their white tusks crushed o'er the whiter skull,
As it slipped through their jaws when their edge grew dull,
As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
When they scarce could rise from the spot where they fed,
So well had they broken a lingering fast,
With those who had fallen, for that night's repast.

It is because we believe, intentionally or unintentionally, the moral and material help of the English Government has gone to support the monsters that have created such scenes that we have met here to-day to protest against all further help or protection being given to such a power. This agitation has already produced three results. In the first place it has had some influence on our own Government—not sufficient, but it has had some. The Ministers have not altered their policy on the Eastern Question, but they have modified it. With respect to Bulgaria these meetings have clearly stimulated Lord Derby. The agitation has in the second place had an unmistakable effect on the Ottoman Government. When the accounts of these atrocities were first published, the Sultan's advisers unblushingly denied them. When the facts were repeated they attempted to disparage them by alleging they were exaggerated. Driven from that point, they attempted to palliate the conduct of their soldiers by saying that the Bulgarians had committed like atrocities—a statement that has not the shadow of foundation, and one amongst the many plausible lies that came fast and thick from the Government of Constantinople. In the third place, these meetings in England have lent fresh hope and new strength to the Servians in their resolute efforts to win their own and their brother Slavs' freedom.

There are four points that the English people should

insist upon; first, the exemplary punishment of the perpetrators of these crimes; second, the restoration of the women and children that have been carried to Turkish harems; third, the rebuilding of the homesteads and giving of compensation to the remnants of the unhappy families that have perished; and last, but most important, the taking of means to prevent the repetition of such barbarities. These are the four points we are to call upon our Government to insist upon. The first, punishment of the guilty men, is the one I confess that I am least concerned in. Punishment except as a means of producing a better state of things in future is of small moment; and indeed I have little faith in Turkish justice. I read in the newspapers recently an account of a circumstance that fairly illustrates the Turkish law. The case I refer to was this: Some settlers in the Western portion of America had entered into a treaty with an Indian tribe. The bargain was that the Red men had not to come over a certain boundary, and that they had to observe certain rules in their dealings with the whites. One man of this tribe, however, broke this engagement, committed various depredations upon the colonists, and, I believe, killed one of them. The Americans brought the breach of regulations before the Indian chief, and demanded that the man who had committed the offence should be punished. The tribe considered the charge in solemn conclave. In reply, they admitted that it was true the man in question had committed the offence, and ought to be shot. But they said the guilty Indian was a shoemaker, and the only one they had in the tribe. They could not afford to lose him, but they had a weaver (or some other artificer) for whom they had no use, and the Americans could shoot him if they liked. It is in some such mode as this that the Turks administer justice. Some months ago, there were two consuls murdered at Salonica, and the men that were supposed to be implicated

in that crime were brought up before the Turkish Courts, tried, found guilty, and sentenced. One of them was sent for imprisonment for some ten months, another for five months. The German and French Governments complained that the punishment inflicted upon these men was inadequate. "Oh," said the Turkish Government, "if you wish it we will try them afresh, and punish them more." The men were accordingly retried, and instead of sentences of ten months and five months, they were sentenced to ten years and five years' imprisonment. That is an illustration of Turkish ideas of justice. I have no faith, therefore, in any fair trial for Bulgarian murderers, a trial such as English people have any respect for. But really it is not the ignorant Bashi-Bazouk that ought to be punished, but the men in authority at Constantinople who employed them. It was these wily pashas, these plausible beys, who knew the character of the men they were engaging, and knowing that, practically constituted themselves the real malefactors. These are the persons that ought really to be tried, not the semi-savage Circassians.

As to the second point, the restoration of women and children that are living in their homes, I suppose an effort will be made to accomplish it. Whether it will be successful or not remains to be seen. I doubt it. I trust Lord Derby will insist upon the Turkish Government giving full monetary and material compensation to the sufferers that are left. When the English Government refused to sign the Berlin Memorandum at the beginning of this year, one of the grounds of their refusal was that the Turks had not money to give to the Bosnians and Herzegovinians to rebuild their villages and their churches. Lord Derby said that it was of no use asking the Turks to do this, as they had no funds, and could not get any. Since that Turkey has entered upon a serious war with Servia; her resources have not grown during the last six months. Yet the pressure

brought by this movement upon Lord Derby, and in his turn upon Turkey, has caused it within the last few days to send £25,000 to Bulgaria to assist in rebuilding the burnt villages and replacing the ruined crops. That shows the force of opinion in this country can react on the shores of the Bosphorus, and carry security to the slopes of the Balkans.

The last point, insisting on security for the future, is a very serious one, and involves considerations that I am quite sure at this late hour cannot be adequately discussed. I admit freely that the Eastern question is surrounded with difficulties, and that while it may be comparatively easy to sketch a plan for its settlement on this open hill side in a public meeting, it is another and very different thing for our Foreign Secretary to deal with it. Amongst the numerous ways of dealing with it there is not one that has been proposed in favour of which some argument may be advanced: but still I am satisfied that the very worst thing that we can do is to allow matters to remain as they are. Whatever else we do, certainly to permit the continuation of the Turkish Empire in its present form would be a scandal to civilisation and an outrage upon humanity. The existence of the Turks in Europe is a perpetual source of irritation. They have never been able to assimilate themselves to Western manners and civilisation. The Magyars and other races have come from Asia and become really an European people. The Turks are to-day what they were four centuries ago—a foreign army encamped on the Western side of the Bosphorus; or rather, I should say, they are a horde of semi-savage Tartars whom the force of arms and national jealousies have made the occupants of the most fertile parts in the whole of Europe. They have made no progress, indeed it is contrary to their teaching to change. The Moslems boast that they are now as they were in the beginning, and a

they hope to be always—the same—unchanged and unchangeable. The boast of the great champions of Mussulmans is that wherever they plant their standard in presence of the Infidel there no grass will grow. That boast has been literally verified, for the fairest parts of Europe have been turned by the Turks from a garden into wilderness and a desert. There is no hope for the redemption of such people. The Turks' condition in Europe has something in common with the condition of the Indians in America. The United States Government have attempted again and again to civilise the Red men, but have always been unsuccessful. They are brought to a certain extent under the restraint of civilisation, and then suddenly they bound away to the prairie, to the forest, and seek, by the river and the lake, by hunting and fishing, their wild means of living. It is the same with the Turks. You cannot infuse into them civilised habits and pursuits. They squat upon the ground and take what its fertile surface will produce without labour. They despise commerce, and look with contempt on modern enterprise. Their boast is that they are simply soldiers, and they think and act as if the Infidels—the mass of mankind—should be their slaves. It is useless attempting to change the natural character of these people. Again and again it has been attempted, and it has always failed. Some of the very wisest and best English statesmen have indulged in the hope that the Turk might be reformed, but after many attempts they have been bitterly disappointed. The Turks are worse now than they were at the Crimean war, and they were worse in 1854 than when they met the Russians under Suwarrow. They have imbibed many of the vices of the West and abandoned some of their ancient virtues.

Yet, notwithstanding that the Turks are of the char- ibed, most responsible politicians maintain that unwise to destroy the territorial framework of

the Ottoman empire. The reasons for their entertaining that belief are simply these :—They believe, if the Turkish power were entirely broken, Russia would take possession of Constantinople, which would be inimical to British interest, and probably imperil our Indian Empire. On these grounds they therefore advocate the maintenance of the eastern corner of Europe by the Mussulman. That is the argument. I ask you for a moment or two to consider how far it is correct. I willingly admit that it was for years the desire of Russia to possess Constantinople, and that the late Emperor of Russia strove to accomplish the design. Other Russian emperors undoubtedly dreamt of wielding the sovereign authority over Eastern Europe and Western Asia. These were the Imperial Russian dreams years ago. I know of no evidence to show that this is the wish of the present ruler of Russia, or the general desire of the Russian people. There has been no indication within the last fifteen years to prove that the Russian Empire is moved by such ambitious projects. It is quite true that there is a Pan-Slavistic society in Russia, but while that body is anxious for the freedom of the Slavonic race, there is no proof that they are bent only upon securing one nation of Slavs. Many intelligent Russians entertain strong objections to the extension of Russian rule to Constantinople. And for this very sensible reason. They know that no attempt to secure universal empire has ever yet been successful. Whenever the effort has been made it has failed. The very extent of such empires destroys them. There is not sufficient homogeneity and unity amongst the different people to hold them together, and they fall to pieces by their own weight. The Russians, whose number is considerable, and, I believe, increasing, are of opinion that it would be unwise to remove the capital of Russia from Petersburg to Constantinople. On all these grounds, then, I dismiss this

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Italians would resist an attempt of France the Peninsula, and so the Spaniards would mpt by either Frenchmen or Italians to rule he Russian people no doubt sympathise with gionists in their efforts for freedom, yet I Bosnians and the Servians would resist any the part of Russia to be masters over them. f Russian aggression is an exploded illusion; pposing it were true, the existence of a circle oples such as I have described would be a rrier to her progress than the effete and feeble npire.

are several projects for effecting a change in h dominion. All are necessarily tentative. three that may be dismissed as impracticable, lesirable. There are three that we may consider, rd Derby's phrase, as "within the domain of politics." The first is to drive the Turks out of ltogether. Abstractly, that would, in the estima- nany, be the best way; but it is impossible, and , I think, unjust. No responsible politician has proposed that such should be done. Indeed, f it could be done. The Mohammedans in Europe something like four millions of people, and you t drive them all away without a desperate effort. struggle would be a war of desperation. Mussul- aticism would be aroused, and if the Turks turned cks to the wall, possibly some of their old military might return to them, and they might accomplish deeds in the way of fighting than they have recently d. We must dismiss, therefore, the question of the Turks out of Europe by force. The next pro- is that we should leave Turkey entirely alone. the Turks, say some, and let the Otto- best terms it can with the Roumanian,

Slavonian, and Greek races. Well, there is something to be said in favour of that course of action, but not much. If that course were adopted, we would witness scenes of desolation, of bloodshed, and of misery in the Eastern portion of Europe such as we have not known since the time of Attila. No man of political authority has committed himself to this scheme. There is a third, and that is that the governors of Turkey, the Sultan and his Grand Vizier, his Pashas and Beys, and all the paraphernalia of Turkish rule, should, with their harems and wives and slaves, all go into Asia; and that their interests should be commuted and bought up. This proposal has received support from men of responsibility and influence in the political world. I believe it is not treated with entire indifference even in St. Petersburg. It has been proposed that the man who should be put to rule the different states —the Turk being gone—should be the Duke of Edinburgh. I do not think Prince Alfred would relish the appointment. The Emperor of France attempted to set up an empire in Mexico, and the sad, the tragic history of Maximilian and his poor wife may be a warning to our Queen's son. For my part I have little faith in these carpet knights or captains. Kings in general, especially the race that we now have, are not blessed with great vigour of mind or elevation of soul. An able and experienced courtier, a man officially connected for years with our Hanoverian rulers, left certain memoirs which not long since were published. After all his experience of kings and princes, he gave it as his opinion that they were amongst the meanest, most selfish, and incompetent of mankind. Of course there are exceptions. If, however, there is to be a ruler got for the confederated Christian people of Turkey it had better be an Eastern Bolivar, or a man like the late President of the Mexican Republic, Juarez, who fought for the freedom of his country against the French for so many years under

such desperate disadvantages, and ultimately conquered. Such a ruler should be a man racy of the soil and animated by the feelings and sentiments of the people among whom he lives. There is no reason why these people should not have independent governments and republics of their own if they choose. When Spain left South America a whole batch of republics and independent states were formed; and although they have not been eminently prosperous, still they have struggled, perhaps blundered, into comparative prosperity. Take Chili, for example. There are few Governments in the world under which a larger measure of freedom is enjoyed. I know of no reason why there should not be a Turkish Chili.

All these three proposals—to drive the Turks out of Europe altogether, to leave them alone, or to buy out the Sultan and his officials, may, however, for the present be dismissed as more or less of speculation, and as scarcely practical. But there are three proposals before this country which ought to be deliberated upon. None of them are original, and they have all often been discussed. One has received the support of Mr. Gladstone, the other the approval of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, and the third owes its origin really to the present Government. Mr. Gladstone proposes that Bulgaria, Bosnia, and Herzegovina should be made independent in the same way as Servia and Roumania. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe suggests that the Turkish rulers in these States should be withdrawn, and that they should in future be ruled by commissioners from Constantinople, these commissioners being appointed by the six Great Powers. Lord Derby proposes that the existing Turkish rulers shall remain, but that their action shall be modified, and to some extent guided, by the establishment of local administrative boards in each district—in other words, a species of Bulgarian home rule, or rather, I should say, a form of communal government,

such as was attempted to be established in France five years ago. These are practical proposals. Mr. Gladstone's suggestion best commends itself to intelligent Englishmen. It has precedent in its favour—it has been tried and found to work successfully. Roumania, Greece, Servia, and Montenegro have prospered under an independent autonomy. Lord Derby's scheme has been tried in Crete, and has been a signal failure. There are, I grant you, difficulties in the way of Mr. Gladstone's project. But that might be expected. There are obstacles, more or less, to every change, every reform. They are not, however, in any sense insuperable. In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are one and a quarter millions of people, of whom about four hundred thousand are Mahomedans. Hitherto the Mahomedans have been absolute rulers in the country. The Christians, or nearly two-thirds of the population, have had no authority in the State. In Mr. Gladstone's proposal the Mussulman will be deprived of that exclusive rule, and all races and sects will stand on a common footing before the law. They will rule their provinces as Montenegro and Servia now. Supposing the Mahomedan was bought out by the Government. They would not consent either to go on terms of equality with the Christian or to submit to them, they might be dealt with as they were dealt with when Roumania was made into a tributary state. In Roumania the interest of the Mahomedan was bought out by the Government. They were allowed two years to decide whether they would remain in Roumania or go on to Turkey. Those that chose to leave had their estates valued, the Government paid for them, and then resold the land to Christians on certain conditions. The four hundred thousand Mahomedans in Bosnia and Herzegovina, if they wished to leave, might be treated with on like conditions. But my belief is that if these lazy, plausible, unscrupulous, tyrannical Pashas

were removed, some at least of the peaceful Mahomedans living under the shadow of the Balkan Mountains would make common cause with their Christian neighbours and adapt themselves to the altered mode of rule. This has been so in Greece. In that country there are only one and a half millions of people. Amongst these there are some twelve thousand Mahomedans, most prosperous and contented Grecian subjects. With respect to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the proposal for distinct autonomy is more easy of attainment, because the two provinces constitute a sort of limbs to Turkey. Herzegovina lies to the north of Montenegro, that mountain province being even nearer Constantinople than Herzegovina. Bosnia lies beyond them, and a reference to the map will show that they are naturally well situated for independence, if not union. With respect to Bulgaria it is somewhat different. Bulgaria is a portion of the trunk of the Turkish empire, but, as just now stated by my friend Mr. Watson, the Balkans would be an excellent boundary between Turkey proper, as it is to be, and is its present geographical arrangement. Thirty years ago the Pruth was the boundary of Turkey towards the north; after the Crimean war the Danube was the boundary; and now the boundary ought to be the Balkans. A proposal of that kind would be successful as far as Bulgaria is concerned, inasmuch as in Bulgaria the population of Mahomedans, as Mr. Watson has shown, is only one-fifth of the entire population. I maintain that the scheme suggested by Mr. Gladstone ought to receive the support of this country and of all the free peoples of Europe. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe's proposal is better than the present rule. But I have very little faith in the rule of commissions composed of different nationalities. I object to them on this ground. It is bad for any people to be kept under a species of tutelage. They had better blunder into independence by themselves than be guided

into it by leading strings of foreign Powers. Lord Derby proposes to allow the present Turkish rulers to remain with all their power, but he is willing to try to mitigate their cruel and oppressive domination by the formation of local bodies having administrative but not political authority. I make bold to say these courts would be of small influence in the presence of the ruling Pashas, who by such an arrangement would really have all their old power. I have no hope Lord Derby's proposal would improve matters.

The point for us to consider, and the people of this country to consider is, which scheme should receive support. I hold that Parliament should be summoned to give full consideration to this subject. Lord Beaconsfield admits that the people of this country hold opinions antagonistic to the views of the Government. He cannot, therefore, rule constitutionally while he acts on this important question, by his own confession, contrary to the wishes of the nation. The aspect of affairs within the last forty-eight hours has entirely changed. The Servians have taken the question into their own hands, and in recommencing active hostilities have removed it from the domain of diplomacy. I fear we have been too long in taking the steps now proposed; but be that as it may, the interest of the country, the welfare of humanity, the peace, even the existence, of masses of our fellow men, demand that the collective statesmanship of Europe should give it prompt and earnest consideration. If the English people, speaking by their representatives, support the proposals of Lord Derby and his colleagues, then they will have additional weight in dealing with the question in the councils of Europe. If, on the other hand, they do not support them, there are only two courses open—either resignation on the part of the Government, or an appeal to the country!

II.—THE VOTE OF CREDIT.

House of Commons, February 7th, 1878.

Speech delivered in favour of the vote for six millions, on hearing the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Stafford Northcote), that "notwithstanding the Armistice the Russians were pushing on to Constantinople."

This is a time when party divisions should be forgotten. It is not the interest of a faction that is at stake; it is the welfare of our common country. The policy of the Government, like everything human, has been imperfect. No body of men placed in a like position could have carried the ship of state through so many troubles without having been guilty of some mistakes. I do not suppose the Ministers themselves lay claim to perfection. But what I hold (and I speak as a general political opponent) is that the policy of the Government through these long and perplexing negotiations has been, taking it as a whole, prudent, temperate, and fair. There are points in their course of action that I disagree with, but this is not the moment to enter into narrow criticisms. I believe that their procedure throughout has been such as to command the general assent of the country. But whatever speculative differences may exist amongst us as to the belligerents in the late war, the points at issue now are far too important to be settled by political lectures or party squabbles. In domestic policy there is no need for reticence. The fuller and franker expressions of opinion we have the better, but

when national interests are at stake, when national existence may be imperilled, patriotism and good sense require that we should close our ranks and present an united front to the world. I speak as an English radical, as a consistent and persistent opponent of the Ministry in their general policy, but I trust that before I am a political partisan I am a patriot, and that before I am a radical, I am an Englishman. I am satisfied that this feeling pervades a large section of the Opposition, and in face of the very alarming and serious intelligence that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has just furnished us with, I hold it is our duty to close the somewhat irritating discussion that has been going on nearly ever since Parliament met. These debates generate a feeling which may drive the country, whether we wish it or not, into hostile action against Russia. The position the Government has taken is strengthened by the news that has just reached us. Again and again Ministers have said the position is critical and dangerous. Gentlemen on the other side have derided, almost laughed at, their dread and their suspicions, but the telegrams of our Ambassador at Constantinople show that the Government has been better informed than their critics. The vote of credit will be passed under any circumstances. It will be carried by a large majority if it goes to a division. The Opposition know this as well as the Government. In the face, then, of the altered position of affairs, I appeal to gentlemen near me to abandon their hostilities and allow the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be assented to. Our firmness and union will be the best preventive of war and the best security for peace.

III.—THE EASTERN QUESTION.

House of Commons, February 11th, 1878.

Speech delivered on the Report of the Committee of Supply, with reference to the vote for six millions for warlike purposes, in consequence of the Russian advance on Constantinople. The following are Mr. Gladstone's remarks, which occasioned the speech:—"I heard the hon. member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen) deliver a speech the other night, which was loudly cheered from the other side of the House. The principle the hon. member laid down was that on questions of foreign policy we should cast aside our differences, and adopt what the Government proposed, and anything else, the hon. member said, was preferring party to country. Far be it from me to ask any man to prefer party to country. To do so would be a great and gross mistake, but not a greater mistake than was made by my hon. friend himself, when he said that in a question of foreign policy we are to surrender to their opinion and judgment, and simply to support that which might be proposed by the Ministers—that amounted to this, that in questions of foreign policy we are to have no regard to right and wrong; that we are all to be Englishmen, and that whatever proposal is made in the name of England we are to support. Such a proposition as that is most shallow in philosophy, and most unwise in policy."

I have not, during this or the previous session, except for a minute on Thursday, taken any part in these debates. I would, however, be glad to be allowed the privilege, before the vote passes its final stage, of making a few remarks. There is no duty pertaining to the office of a representative that I approach with more hesitation, and undertake with greater reluctance, than that of appearing to interrupt the course of business by troubling members

with any utterances of mine. I would not do so now if it had not been for some comments made by the right hon. gentleman, the member for Greenwich (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) on Friday night. The right hon. gentleman misunderstood the observations I made the previous evening, and quite unintentionally, I am sure, misrepresented them. I was not present when he spoke, or I should have replied there and then. I do not profess to quote his precise words, but in effect he said I upheld the doctrine of allowing the Government of the day to have uncontrolled authority in foreign affairs—that while we might fight over domestic politics, we had to accept implicitly, and without criticism, the action of any party in power on foreign questions. I think I have correctly represented the right hon. gentleman's statement. I do not think there is a member in this House who will subscribe to such a political gospel.. It may flourish in the arbitrary atmosphere of a Russian court, but it can't live in England. I, at least, repudiate such a faith. I spoke on Thursday entirely without premeditation. I uttered the feelings and the thoughts that came unbidden to my lips on listening to the very grave statements made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. They were only a poor reproduction of the world-old sentiment which a Whig statesman, historian, and poet has put into the mouth of a Roman minstrel, who, when mourning the memories of a heroic and vanished past, sung regretfully of the time

When none was for a party,
And all were for the State.

A man speaking under strong emotions ought not to be made an offender for a word. If that rule were applied to the right hon. gentleman, he would have a good deal to answer for. I claim no exemption, however, on that ground. The exact phrases I used did not bear, and certainly they were not intended to bear, the interpretation

put upon them. I said that while we might at all times discuss domestic questions fully and frankly, when national interests were imperilled—national existence possibly at stake—then we should close our ranks and forget that we are Whigs, Tories, and Radicals; remember only that we are Englishmen, and present a united front to the world. The time when and the circumstances under which the effacement of party landmarks was to take place constituted the point in my sentence. I did not say—I did not think—it would have been unpardonable presumption if I had—that everyone who agreed with me was a patriot, and every one who disagreed with me was not. But what I did say was that, in my judgment—it might not be the judgment of other people—patriotism and good sense required that the course I indicated should be followed. The general principles of national action—whether we are to put up a Monarchy in one country, or destroy a Republic in another—whether we are to be partisans in a strife or neutrals—must be decided by the people, and by them alone. But the policy having been assented to, its execution must be left to the Executive. If they blunder you may censure them, dismiss them, or impeach them; but in a moment of national peril, do not paralyse their movements by unnecessary complications. In our foreign relations, there are matters that it is undesirable to publish, and that can't, with justice to other nations, be known outside the Foreign Office. The right hon. gentleman himself admitted on Monday last that, when he asked for a vote of two millions at the time of the Franco-German war, he did not state all, or even the chief grounds for making that demand. To have done so in Parliament would, he said, at that time, have been attended with inconvenience, if not danger. Was it not possible that in the present crisis there were circumstances known only to the Ministers that prevented them explaining fully the reasons for the course they were pursuing?

The confidence that Parliament gave the late Government might be fairly granted to the present on such an issue. We may always with advantage dilate on the broad principles and the general issues that are at stake in foreign questions, but when the time for action comes, it not infrequently happens that the details of diplomacy, the whispers of State, supply circumstances that determine the course of Cabinets. Reasonable politicians recognise the position of men weighted with such responsibility. I regret that so much feeling has been thrown into this dispute. Good, earnest, and devout men both in and out of Parliament, sincerely desirous of serving what they believe to be the interests of their country and freedom, have manifested in the discussion a somewhat intolerant temper. I honour their motives, I respect their intentions, but I have not been able altogether to approve their attitude. While they have been keenly suspicious of our own Government, they have said, or insinuated, all manner of smooth things, and put the best interpretation on the doings of foreign rulers. The Czar and his Ministers have had their designs praised by sympathising admirers, but our own Government have been subjected to constant, and, I must say, I think, undeserved innuendoes. There is no member of this House, who, by training, instincts, and convictions is more anti-Tory than I am. There is no one who has voted more persistently against the policy of the Ministers—not even the member for Cavan—but I will trust my own countrymen, whatever their politics, before the statesmen of either Russia or Germany. I have more faith in British Ministers, whether Whig or Tory, than I have in the Chancellors of any Imperial despotism, however pretentiously pious.

In considering questions of foreign policy, we often, in my judgment, form an inadequate and imperfect historical conception of the position and antecedents of this

free trade is of our commercial—policy. The Government would not have been justified in changing this policy without some formal or informal expression of public opinion. No one can deny that an expression of opinion has been got. A man must be either blind or deaf, or both, who does not see and hear that a great change has taken place in the minds of a considerable section of the people of this country on this subject. Many persons, and those highly influential, are averse to our former policy with respect to Turkey. Opinion is in a state of transition. It has manifested itself on this side of the House, where there are not two, but three times two, parties. It has been shown in the Ministerial benches, and has produced its effect within the close precincts of the Cabinet. When we are in such a state of political chaos, I appeal to hon. gentlemen on both sides whether it is either wise or desirable to be so intolerant with each other. Some have gone forward, others have gone back, and some have been stationary on this question. We shall best promote the interests of the nation by showing liberal consideration for each other's opinion and susceptibilities.

The question before Europe is—Is Turkey to be strangled? and, if so, has Russia to succeed to her possessions? We may hesitate to confront the inevitable issue, but we cannot either postpone or evade it. Are the Osmanli to be annihilated by those who murder for the love of God? and are their places to be filled by the Muscovites and their satraps? That is the problem to which all this diplomacy leads up. There are hon. gentlemen who will answer the interrogatory in the affirmative—who will declare that for its bad Government Turkey's throat should be cut. I cannot go the length with them. I admit that the rule of the Porte in the past has combined ry evil that can be covered by civil Government. In of peace, it has been too weak or too apathetic to

make its will respected. In times of excitement, it has enforced its edicts by a spasmodic exercise of authority—sometimes cruel, sometimes capricious, and not unfrequently sanguinary. Industry has been discouraged; trade has been looked upon with contempt; taxation has been little better than legalised plunder; and the whole administration of the pashas has been systematically and thievishly corrupt. Their procedure has been absolutely indefensible. But when all this has been said, it is only right to add that the Government of Turkey is no worse than that of other Asiatic and African States with which we hold close if not cordial relations. The Government of China and of Persia is as bad; that of Egypt, which is propped up by English capitalists, is worse. When we remember the history—the black history—of the American and West India slavery, when we recall the ferocity—for no other word will express it—with which Ireland was, and with which Poland is ruled, we should manifest some moderation in our denunciation of the Turks. I repeat that Governments as venal, as tyrannical, as lawless, and as lazy are our allies, and with our own record in Ireland in the past, and in India more recently, English politicians should not be so ready to rush into hysterics over Turkish delinquencies. It is either sectarian or partizan bigotry or imperfect historical knowledge that leads men to declare that every Mussulman is little better than a wild beast—an anti-human specimen of humanity—and that the Ottoman Empire is the foulest political organisation in existence. Such exaggerations are born either of ignorance or religious rancour.

It is true that the Christians in Turkey are denied any participation in the civil administration, just as the Catholics and the Jews were in this country till recently, and as our Hindoo and Mahomedan fellow-subjects are in India to-day. But as a set-off to this exclusion, they

have been relieved from the duty, the onerous duty, of bearing arms. No man is persecuted in Turkey because he is a Christian. There is there not only complete, but contemptuous toleration. The Mussulmans look with pity upon the different sects into which Christians are divided; and while they refuse to treat them as civil equals, they scorn to persecute them as inferiors. The persistent cry about the material misery of Bulgaria has been exploded. It has been proved by a cloud of witnesses that the Bulgarian peasant is in a vastly superior position to the Russian farmer, and equal to the same class in this country. This fact has been so well attested that no one will attempt to gainsay it. It has been urged with force by my hon. friend, the member for Sheffield, and others, that even if this statement is correct, it is not an answer to the demand of the Christians for civil and political equality. It is not sufficient that they should be commercially prosperous and freed from persecution on the score of their religion. They require something further, and more. I admit the justice of their claim. I grant the necessity for its immediate concession as completely as my hon. friend, the member for Westmeath. On that ground, I am entirely at one with these hon. gentlemen.

We are reminded that England sympathised with the Italians in their struggle for national existence, and we are asked why we refuse to Bulgaria what we rejoiced had been conceded to the countrymen of Cavour and Garibaldi. The circumstances are not analogous. In Italy there were broadly marked natural features and boundaries—the sea on the one side, the mountains on the other. The people, too, were homogeneous. They spoke the same language, held the same faith, shared the same glorious national memories. This is true also of the Slavs in Montenegro and Servia, of the Latin races in Roumania, and of the Greeks; but it is not the case with

the inhabitants of Turkey proper. One village there is Mahomedan, the next Christian, and the third partly Jewish. The people are dotted about in settlements like gipsies. Remove the Turkish rule entirely from Roumelia, and you simply substitute a Christian despotism for a Mahomedan. Slavs, Albanians, Greeks, adherents of the Latin Church, and of the Greek Church, Jews, Mussulmans, are all gathered together in indescribable and unhappy confusion. Heretofore, the Mahomedan in those districts has been the dominant race, because they have been the most numerous and the most tolerant. Supplant it by Christian ascendency and you only replace one bad form of exclusive rule by another. You put the boot on the other leg. If the Mahomedans hitherto persecuted the Christians—which as Christians I deny, but as citizens I admit—it is certain that the Christians would in the future persecute the Mahomedans. Remove the restraints, and the fierce fanatical passions of hostile classes will be let loose to fly at each other's throats. We know how the Servians and the Roumanians persecute the Jews, how the adherents of the Greek Church persecute the followers of the Latin creed, how the Slav hates the Greek and the Greek hates the Slav. I do not say that these difficulties ought to prevent the Christians from enjoying the freedom they are entitled to, but I cite the facts for the purpose of showing that the creation of a nationality amongst the heterogeneous and conflicting creeds, races and tribes in Turkey proper, is a very different thing to the creation of a nationality out of the homogeneous people of Hungary, Poland, and Italy.

Persons well acquainted with the East—I do not endorse their opinion, but I give it for what it is worth—maintain that the rule of the Turk, with all its drawbacks, would, if reformed in the districts where the Mahomedans predominate, be preferable to the constant struggle for

mastery between the rival sects and races who hate each other more bitterly than any of them hate the Mussulman. The glowing but fictitious pictures that we have had recently drawn in this country of the magnanimous Montenegrins, the chivalrous Servians, and the meek Bulgarians, have been rudely blurred by this year's war. I fear an impartial historian will declare that the moral characteristics of the different races do not differ greatly. In any balance of virtues, the Mahomedan population—I don't mean the Pashas or their military or their ecclesiastical leaders, but the Mussulman peasantry—are the equals, and in some respects the superiors, of their Christian neighbours. We have been often assured that they are dead or dying. But in the blood-stained spurs and passes of the Balkans they have recently given striking evidence that they live. Their courage and military skill were derided in this House last session. It was declared, with wearying iteration, that Turkey consisted only of a ring of corrupt Pashas and of a horde of semi-savage brigands from Asia. This war has shown that there is a Turkish nation beyond the denizens of the sumptuous palaces on the Bosphorus, and outside the gathering grounds of the Bashi-Bazouks. The memorable struggle before Plevna will be associated in history with the sieges of Saragossa, Londonderry, Antwerp, and Kars. The name of Osman will be linked with the foremost commanders of modern times. It was not the dinted, rusty scimitar of Mahomet that that gallant Moslem wielded. The skill that planned the fortifications, the dauntless courage that manned the deadly breach in face of such fearful odds—the last crust consumed, the last cartridge gone, and that led the final charge, was the dazzling fire of genuine patriotism. A people capable of such intense energy, such generous and complete obedience, such utter self-sacrifice and heroic devotion have vindicated their [illegible] t least to live.

The greatest want of the Turks has been their utter inability to adapt themselves to the constant changes and incessant movements going on around. Their traditions, their training, and their creed, have kept them stationary. While other nations have been persistently proselytising and progressing, the sons of Islam have stood still. They must move, or they will be swamped by the complex and competing forces that are surging around them. All intelligent Turks recognise this. And their honest efforts to improve their administration, to establish their constitution, and their gallant struggle against their domineering enemies, ought to win for the remnant of the race another opportunity of assimilating themselves to the wants of modern life. The Turkish people are no worse to-day than when we fought for their independence in the Crimea, and the Turkish Government is better. All that has been said of their lust, cruelty, and oppression was as true in 1856, when we concluded two treaties for their defence, and in 1871, when the late Government accentuated, endorsed, and confirmed that treaty, as it is to-day.

If Turkey is dying, there is no reason why Russia should slay her before her time. Let her die in peace. If she is dying, that is no justification for the northern vulture to prey upon the yet quivering body of his stricken victim. If the Osmanli are driven to the other side of the Bosphorus, their dominions will become the spoil of their relentless enemies, whose fierce hussars are now streaming into Roumelia for the double purpose of a war of conquest and a religious crusade. I am not now speaking of British interests, I am not thinking of the danger Russia may be to our Indian empire, but I ask English Liberals if they have ever seriously considered the political aspect of an Imperial despotism bestriding Europe from the waters of the Neva to those of the Amoor, or of the head of the Greek Church, the Eastern Pope, the master of many

legions, having one foot on the Baltic, planting the other on the Bosphorus. When icebergs flow into Southern latitudes, they freeze the air for miles around. Will not this political iceberg, when it descends upon the genial shores of the Mediterranean, wither the young shoots of liberty that are springing up between the crevices of the worn-out fabrics of despotism? Is it the part of English Liberals to encourage these sanguinary apostles of Christianity who are now swarming from Sarmatian swamps and Scythian wilds, in their raid into South-Eastern Europe, to plead for this coarsest phantom of social and political life? The Russian people are an inoffensive, unaggressive, and kindly race—not educated, superstitious, and somewhat intemperate. It is certainly not of them that I am afraid; but there is a ring of Christian Pashas at St. Petersburg as corrupt and cruel as the ring of Mahomedan Pashas at Constantinople. They have been the camp-followers of civilisation, as merciless and unscrupulous as camp-followers usually are. They have the ferocity of barbarism with the duplicity of civilisation. Their first word is gold, the second the sword, the third Siberia. Bribery, bayonets, banishment, are the triple pillars upon which their politico-military-ecclesiastical system stands. I have no wish to generate antipathies towards either the Russian or any other people. But in the presence of existing circumstances it was necessary that every man should speak the honest convictions of his mind; and I cannot regard this handing over of two-thirds or three-fourths of the continent of Europe to an aggressive, military, ecclesiastical autocracy, otherwise than as dangerous to human freedom, peace, and civil progress.

IV.—FOREIGN POLICY OF ENGLAND.

TOWN HALL, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, JANUARY 31ST, 1880.

I have rarely addressed a meeting with more misgivings than I do this one. My hesitation does not arise from any doubt I entertain as to the correctness of the statements I am about to make, of the strength of the argument I purpose sustaining, or of the soundness of the deductions I intend to draw. On all these points I am thoroughly persuaded in my own mind. My reluctance to speaking springs from the conviction I entertain that anything I can say will be valueless, and may be locally mischievous. International problems of great intricacy and importance have come up for settlement since the last general election. Many of the issues started are old ones, some of them centuries old, but they were not then before the electors. The Liberals, as a body, have assumed towards them an altered attitude. They have abandoned, no doubt for reasons which appeared to them good, the historic policy of the country, if not the traditional principles of the party. There is necessarily difficulty in fixing with precision the position of a complex body in a state of change. But no injustice will, I think, be done to anyone by saying that many Liberals, on foreign questions, have espoused in spirit, if not in substance, the doctrines which were held with such tenacity and expounded with such earnestness by that band of capable men who made the world their debtors by their labours for free trade. I have not been able to become a convert to this new faith. I am not, and never was, an adherent of what is popularly known as the "Manchester School." On this subject

tinguished persons. We are not philosophers speculating upon what might be, nor philanthropists dilating upon what ought to be, nor poets chanting the dirge of a brilliant but buried past. We are matter-of-fact politicians, talking of the prosaic present. And politics, I fear, are too often controlled more by self-interest than by sentiment. We are not dealing with an ideal State. If we were, the fragmentary and composite Empire of Britain would not realise my Utopia. Greece, whose name has been for centuries a watchword upon earth, whose fame will never fade, from whose history mankind have derived inspiration and guidance, and which still rises upon our intellectual sight like a mountain-top gilded with sunshine, amidst the devastations of a flood—Greece, I say, rather than law-giving, conquering, imperial, splendid, but savage Rome, would be my model. I would have a State in which every man is free, and where every man is fortified against superstition by education, and against oppression by arms; where the arts and graces of Athens, and the martial independence of Sparta, would commingle with the mercantile and industrial enterprise and the naval prowess of Britain; and in which, while influence and authority are won by intellectual strength and moral worth, a proud defiance could be bid to despotism's banded myriads. But these are the dreams of the idealists. We belong to the real and the active, and not to the imaginary world. We are to deal with things as they are, and not as we can sketch them in our fancy. We are the inheritors of a colonial empire, the most wide-spread, scattered, and extensive ever known. It reaches to every region, and has its feelers and its feeders in every corner of the globe. Some of these possessions came to us in a questionable shape, and by means that no one can justify, and that I, at least, have no desire to palliate or excuse. But the present generation of Englishmen are guiltless of the crime attending their acquisition.

Our colonies cover an area of three millions of square miles, and have a population of fourteen million persons following diverse pursuits, but all animated by one mind, aim, and tradition. In India we have a frontier of twelve thousand miles, an area of one and a half million square miles, and 240,000,000 of people under our sway. Our insular position frees us from many of the dangers which surround Continental States, but our external empire makes us at the same time one of the most sensitive and assailable of nations. No serious movement can take place in any part of the earth without our feeling its influence. No country ever occupied such a peculiar position as Britain and her daughter empires now hold. It is not egotism to say that, notwithstanding all our shortcomings, power so vast was never wielded with so sincere a desire to use it beneficially. Every tribe we touch acknowledges our supremacy, and looks to us either in conscious fear of weakness, or with brightening hope of participating in our elevation. To secure the existence, to rivet the cohesion of this vast dominion, blest with one of the highest forms of freedom that the world has ever seen, to carry to distant countries and succeeding ages the loftiest form of civilisation, is our mission. To abandon the opportunity of usefulness thus conferred, to throw aside the hope of securing equal rights and impartial freedom, to destroy the means of establishing a feeling of fraternity and consciousness of common, material interests amongst so many millions of our fellow beings, would be a narrow, a niggardly, a short-sighted, and a selfish policy for a great nation to pursue. If we left South Africa, what would be the result? There are 350,000 British born men and women—our own kith and kin—living there. Without some protection from the Home Government, the homesteads they have erected by years of patient toil, the centres of civilisation and of commerce that they have created by their enterprise, would

the duty of England to play her part in the great battle of the world, as did our illustrious ancestors, the forerunners of European freedom. Let me apply these principles to the recent controversies in the East and the action that has been taken by this country. India is one of our most distant, as it is one of our most important dependencies. We hold it more as conquerors than as colonists. There are urgent and obvious reasons why our communication with it should be rapid, easy, and expeditious. Nature, mechanical science, and enterprise have contributed to make the best route to it through the Isthmus which unites the continents of Asia and Africa. The Egyptians, the Phœnicians, and the Carthaginians, before the Christian era, travelled to India this way. In the middle ages the Danish and Venetian merchants went by the same road. The first envoy whom England ever sent to India also journeyed by this path—Bishop Sherborne, who was deputed by good King Alfred to undertake a mission to the people on the coast of Coromandel and Malabar. As before the Christian era, so to-day—the most direct route to the East is by the Isthmus of Suez and Asia Minor. The canal is the link which unites our Eastern and Western Empires. Through it we not only reach India but our dependencies in the Chinese seas, our Australian colonies, the Mauritius, and the British settlements on the East Coast of Africa. It is the neck which connects the head with the extremities of our Empire. It has been suggested that if we lost it we could resume our old road by the Cape of Good Hope. It is quite true that this could be done. It is equally true that we might return to pack-horses and stage-waggons as a means of transit, but it is not likely that we shall do so; it would be contrary to the genius of civilisation and the spirit of our times thus to recede. We have got the Canal, and in the interests of ourselves and the

world we will hold it free for every one at all hazards. If Russia were to obtain political supremacy on either side of the Bosphorus, she could stop the Canal or intercept our way to India by the Euphrates Valley. North of the Danube she is comparatively harmless; but with the Black sea, the Sea of Marmora, and the Straits, she would have at her command a position unequalled in the world for commerce and for war. She could barricade the Dardanelles, and behind it she would have two inland seas, which would be at one and the same time harbour, arsenal, dockyard, and naval station. She could there with security and ease equip and arm her ships, and train her sailors, and manœuvre her fleet. In the numberless islands and roadsteads of the Archipelago she would have protection for conducting either offensive or defensive warfare, such as is to be found in no other part of the globe in equal space. This position is the key to Europe—one of its life arteries. Its occupation by a conquering, ambitious, and despotic Power would be a danger to England, to Europe, and to liberty.

The aspirations of the Russian peasant are southward. He yearns to be clear of the Boreal regions of snow and solitude in which he is enveloped for the greater part of the year. As naturally as the sap rises in the vine, so naturally does the desire of the Russian rise to reach more genial regions, and to burst the political and frozen cerements which rob him of life and of development. It is only the force of the iron yoke which makes him a labourer. By choice and by taste he would be a wanderer, a boatman, a pedlar, or a travelling mechanic. Russia is not a nation like France, or Italy, or Spain; it is not a dynastic aggregation of States like Austria; but it is a crushing and devouring political mechanism, which has annihilated full fifty distinct nationalities. It kills every spring of independence; it intercepts and has covered

whole continents with the melancholy monuments of nations. Poland, the Niobe of nations, whose gallant sons have been the knight-errants of liberty the world over, has been all but interred by her in Siberia. Circassia, the cradle of the human race, whose people are the manliest and handsomest in the world, has been converted into a tomb. And she is now seeking to engulf the desert steppes, the briny waters, and the shifting, burning sands that lie between the Caucasus, the Caspian, and the Afghan Table Land. The interest, the instinct, and, to some extent, the necessity of the Russian people, urge them to seek "fresh fields and pastures new" away from their biting north winds, their icy forests, their bleak and limitless plains. The Government, which is Asiatic rule, bastardized by German bureaucracy, with appropriating frenzy has striven to annex territory in all directions; while the Emperors, animated by an ambition akin to that of "Macedonia's Madman and the Swede," have been dazzled by a dream of universal empire. To find a foothold for their power in the unrivalled natural resources which Turkey affords, has been their aim.

The defeat of Russia in the Crimea modified for a time her external and internal policy. To soften the discontent created by the surrender of Sebastopol, liberal legal changes were instituted, and a decree emancipating the serfs was promulgated. The benefits conferred by this instrument are more apparent than real. By it the peasants were relieved from some claims to the landlords, but they were charged with equivalent burdens for the national revenue; and the imperial functionary is often a harder taskmaster than the local lord of the soil. M. Walewski calculated that the emancipation of the serfs doubled the direct taxes of the empire. Repulsed in the south and west, Russia sought an outlet for her stream of conquest in Central Asia. Unnoticed, to a large extent unknown,

she has in that quarter of the globe during recent years absorbed a territory nearly equal in extent to Continental Europe, and she has now a bristling array of bayonets in threatening proximity to our Indian Empire. Although popular feeling and historical recollection have always favoured a campaign for supplanting the crescent by the cross, there is a small but intelligent and influential party in Russia who are adverse to this tempting and treacherous cry of "To Constantinople!" They contend that if the seat of Government were removed from the banks of the cold and misty Neva to those of the brilliant Bosphorus, the empire would perish through the effeminacy generated by residence in the sunny and seductive South. Hardy Northmen would be replaced in the councils of the Czar by intriguing Greeks and Bulgars. This would lead to divisions in which the unwieldy dominions would be split in twain through the struggles for supremacy that would ensue between the genuine Slav and the idle mongrels that would flutter round the Court of the new Byzantium. This view has been maintained not only by authors like Gurowski, and by soldiers like Fadeof, but by many Russian Liberals. Three of the most remarkable men that the revolutions in the East sent into Western Europe were Bakunin, whom the Emperor Nicholas, after an interview with him, described as "a noble but dangerous madman"; Alexander Herzen, one of the most fascinating of men, who combined the philosophy of Germany, the politics of Republican France, and the practical good sense of Englishmen, with the native Russian character; and Mieroslowski, the brilliant and eloquent Polish leader. I have heard all of these gentlemen contend that Europe would not see for many years—probably not for generations—another effort made by Russia to obtain Constantinople. They held this opinion not because they all approved of it—Bakunin certainly did not—but their be-

lief was that the German party in Russia had so realised the hopelessness of a struggle with the Western Powers that they would not resume it.

The nervous, hesitating, indolent, but kindly man who is now at the head of the Russian people, has always, until recently, been credited with a settled determination not to renew the enterprise that ended so disastrously for his father. The idea was general that India and China, rather than Turkey, would be threatened by Russian advance. I own that I largely shared that opinion. But events have shown that this was an error, and that the passion for accomplishing what the people of Russia believed to be their manifest destiny was not dead but only slumbered—the leopard had not changed his spots nor the Tartar his skin. The first pronounced intimation of the retention of this old faith was seen in the course pursued by Russia in the Franco-German war. Immediately our friend and ally France was worsted in that disastrous conflict, the Czar intimated that he intended no longer to comply with the clauses of the Treaty of Paris that neutralised the Black Sea. He did not invite the other Powers of Europe, who, along with himself, were parties to that treaty, to meet and discuss the reasonableness of his request for an alteration, but, with autocratic pride and despotic imperiousness, he proclaimed his determination to look upon that portion of that treaty as null and void. He had observed it as long as France was in a position to unite with England for its maintenance, but when she was temporarily disabled, he seized the opportunity to break an engagement which he had solemnly entered upon. This was the first sign of the change, the effects of which Europe has just witnessed.

Russia, in her attacks upon neighbouring States, follows an uniform and unvarying plan. She begins usually by professing an interest in their welfare. At one time

she is moved by sympathy for her brethren in bonds—as if there were no persons in bonds in Russia. At another time she is roused to fervour for her co-religionists, as if there were no persons suffering for their religious opinions within her own borders. She knows how to lure adjoining rulers to destruction by encouraging them in every frivolous expense, every private vice, and every public iniquity, as she did Abdul Aziz and many an unfortunate Asiatic Khan. She can compass the destruction of popular liberty by jesuitical intrigue, as she did in Poland. She can engage in plots and conspiracies, as she did more recently in Bulgaria. Ignorance, ambition, corruption are all made in turn to minister to her designs. The cupidity of Turkish Pashas, who too often obtained their positions by bribery, and held them by oppression and extortion, and the hopeless confusion into which the Ministers of the Sultan had allowed affairs to drift at Constantinople, formed a favourable field for the work of Russian emissaries. The stereotyped process was followed. There was first complaint, then suggestion, and then the inevitable conference, and the equally inevitable war. The Turkish people, both Mahomedan and Christian, suffered under solid and serious grievances. They had been oppressed and outraged by a system of administration that was outrageous and indefensible; but they sought redress of their grievances at the hands of their own rulers and not from a foreign Power. This was shown by the stubborn resistance that was made to the advance of the Austrian troops into Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Hungarians are the truest friends the Turks have in Europe, and if they fought so stoutly to oppose their entrance to their provinces they would have fought with greater resolution against the admission of the troops of any other country.

After the war the Russian diplomatists and generals

succeeded in getting a band of trembling palace pashas around them at Adrianople, from whom they abstracted a treaty that unmasked their designs and placed them in a broad and startling light before the world. If there had been any doubt before as to the aim Russia had in commencing the war, there could be none then. Before she started on the campaign, the Czar declared—first, that he did not intend to enter Constantinople; second, that he did not seek territorial acquisition; and third, that his sole object was to ensure the freedom of the oppressed nationalities. He kept the word of promise to the ear, but broke it to the hope. He did not enter Constantinople, it is true, but he surrounded it, and his troops would have entered it if the English fleet had not been in the Sea of Marmora, and the English soldiers within call at Malta. He broke the second engagement by annexing Bessarabia and the territory around Batoum, Ardahan, and Kars. By the Treaty of San Stefano he proposed the creation of what he euphemistically described as a "big Bulgaria," in other words, a huge Russian province was to be created, whose borders were to extend to the shores of the Ægean. If the treaty had remained as drawn by Russia, she would have had a port at Kavala in the south, she would have had another in the Adriatic at Antivari, and she would have been left in command of two-thirds of the shores of the Black Sea, from Midia, twenty-five miles north of Constantinople, round to some miles beyond Batoum. There would have been left around Constantinople a few acres of ground, little more than half the size of the county of Durham; then the new Russian State, like a wedge, would intervene; and beyond that there would have been Macedonia, Albania, and the north-western provinces. Turkey, left without frontiers and without fortresses, would have fallen a ready and easy prey to Russia whenever she felt herself strong enough and Europe was in-

different enough to allow her to resume her crusade. By this treaty Russia not only took territory in Armenia and Bessarabia, but she proposed also to subject the entire Balkan peninsula to her authority. She kept her third engagement by ignoring the nationality of the Roumanian inhabitants of Bessarabia, separating them from a free and uniting them to a despotic State. She despised the religious and race leaning of the Mahomedans near Batoum, and treated with contempt the nationality of Mahomedans living in the southern provinces of Turkey. She in this way either evaded or broke every engagement she made. To have allowed Russia to retain the position she projected for herself at San Stefano would have destroyed the balance of power in Europe, would have put the fate of Asia in her hands, and placed in her grasp the virtual dictatorship of two continents.

The main purpose of international arrangement is to secure the freedom and safety of smaller States, and to enable them to live their own lives while surrounded by Powers which could annihilate them without such protection. The law of nations prevents grasping, greedy Governments crushing weaker ones. If it were not sustained, the marauders of the earth would be let loose to prey upon their poor and feeble neighbours. It is no childish dislike of Russia that leads me to contend for the maintenance of this law and this policy. National enmity is no sound or permanent ground of either duty or policy. It is the defence of England and of Europe, the assertion and maintenance of the principles of free government as against a despotism—England and the Western Powers representing the one and Russia the other—that leads me to resist the advance of the Muscovites to the Bosphorus.

In what way has the recent policy of this country contributed to the defence of the Empire, the maintenance of the way to India, and the upholding of the authority

of this country in the councils of Europe? Let us look fairly at the facts as they are, and not as they are painted by rival partisans. To the jaundiced eye everything is yellow. By the fortunes of war—a hypocritical war it is true, but still by the fortunes of war—Russia had Turkey at her mercy. She had fought and she had won. She did not occupy Constantinople, but she commanded it, and to the victors belong the spoil. It is true, as I have just explained, she made certain promises before commencing the conflict which she either evaded or broke. But that is not remarkable. It would have been more remarkable if she had kept them. The Treaty of San Stefano did not fully express her desires, but it did express the extent to which she believed she could with safety go in the presence of the indifference of other Powers, and the assumed incapacity and unwillingness of England to oppose her. The Treaty of Berlin did not fully express what this country wanted, but it did express the extent of the concessions that it was possible to obtain. A comparison of what was dictated by Russia at San Stefano, and what was accepted by her at Berlin, will show the measure of change made mainly at the instance of this country. The Russian troops have evacuated Turkish territory. This may appear a simple statement, but it is not unimportant. Every effort was made by her to obtain possession of the provinces she had conquered. She strove to promote discord between the Mussulman and Christian inhabitants, hoping that discord could be made a pretext for her remaining. Failing in that, she propounded the jesuitical plan of a joint occupation of Eastern Roumelia by herself and other Powers. These schemes, however, were baffled; and there is now not a single Cossack trooper west of the Pruth. If the Treaty of San Stefano had stood as it was drawn, Turkey would not only have been dismembered but destroyed. She has now the opportunity

of making a fresh start in national life. She can, if her rulers choose, rehabilitate herself in the estimation of Europe and of the world. There is little evidence as yet, I am bound to say, of this disposition. The incorrigible pashas who control her policy seem to have learned nothing and forgotten nothing by the cruel experience of the last three years. The Government is as rotten as the portals of the Porte are worm-eaten. These men have most of the vices of both Eastern and Western peoples, and few of their virtues. There are persons high in the confidence of the Sultan who are as completely under the control of the enemies of their country as Faust was under the control of Mephistopheles. But though the Porte perishes Turkey will remain. The Empire vanished, but France was left.

There is, and has been for years, an active and patriotic party in Turkey, who have been striving to adapt their institutions to Western modes of life and to European requirements. The simple programme of this party is the fusion of the various races in the peninsula into an united State, based upon the equality, religious and political, of all. Fuad Pasha and Ali Pasha laboured long and earnestly for these principles, and they are now advocated with equal sincerity by Midhat and his supporters. Men of all creeds and all races will be placed on a common level. This programme has the support of Christian and Mahomedans alike. One of the most painful and regrettable incidents of this controversy was the disparaging way in which the honest efforts of these Turkish reformers were spoken of by Liberal politicians in England. Whoever else cared to sneer at the Turkish Constitution, it certainly was no part of the duty of professed advocates of liberal government to take up their parable against it. It is certainly not impossible to conceive of the establishment of a Government in which both Mahomedans and

Christians may be united, and the pernicious influence which now predominates at Constantinople be exorcised from Turkish political life.

By the Treaty of San Stefano injustice would not only have been done to the Greeks, but that country would have been condemned to sustain an exhausting conflict for its bare existence. By the extension of a Slav State to the Ægean, Greece would have been denied development. With resources limited and population scanty, she would have been stripped of the elements of growth. She might have been an independent State truly, but so weak that she would have been unable to fulfil the purpose of her foundation. She has now the opportunity of working out her redemption—she is the nucleus, the preparatory agency for the enfranchisement of a Hellenic State. Greece has a lofty mission to fulfil, and, despite present unfavourable signs, I do not despair of seeing her accomplish it. She is something more and better than she was when Byron mournfully described her as "Greece, but living Greece nc more." She does live; she has sustained a soul almost "within the ribs of death."

The Spartan blood that in her veins yet throbs at freedom's call:—
Every stone of old Greece—has it not its hero-tale?
Where they fought, where they fell, 'twas on every hill and dale.
The dead are but the hero seed that will spring to life again.

By the Treaty of Berlin Greece gained but little, but at least she was not by it "cribbed, cabined, and confined" to the narrow limits of her too restricted territory.

The idea of most European Liberals has been that Russian aggression could be stayed only by the creation of a belt of free States between the Danube and the Balkans. The different nationalities would be there grouped in distinct organisations, and, combined, they would be - more effective barrier to Muscovite progress than an

effete and receding empire like Turkey. Many Liberals who agreed with this principle saw difficulties in its practical realisation. The inhabitants of this region are chiefly members of the Greek Church. The Czar is the head of that Church, and he holds them in a state of political as well as theological tutelage. Russia has often professed to assist at the birth of a new nation, but she has always managed to keep her thumb upon its throat, so that it could be destroyed if it became troublesome. It was a common saying of the Russian troops in Bulgaria "We have now got these Bulgar pigs, and we will drive them." Apart, however, from these speculative objections to the project of distinct nationalities—the oft-declared policy of the Czars—when the Emperor Nicholas proposed to Sir Hamilton Seymour that England and Russia should divide between them the possessions of the Sick Man, he said there were many points in his proposed scheme on which he was willing to yield to the wishes of England, but there was one point on which he would never yield. Whatever else he consented to, he would never consent to the establishment of a number of small and independent States on the Russian frontier. These would be, he said, nothing but nurseries in which a perpetual crop of Mazzinis and Kossuths would be raised; their opinions would penetrate into his dominions and endanger the necessary authority of his government. This was then the settled policy of Russia, and has been authoritatively expressed repeatedly since. Bulgaria, as created by the Treaty of San Stefano, would have been little more than a Russian Principality; but by the Treaty of Berlin the Bulgarian people have had afforded to them the opportunity of winning for themselves an independent national life. Some few years ago the Bulgarians were held up in this country as models of Christian meekness. Recently they have been condemned with almost equal vigour, and their character has cer-

tainly developed some not very lovable attributes. They profess to be Christians, but they have scarcely acted upon the Christian principle of doing unto others as they would like to be done by. They complained loudly and justly of the oppression they suffered from the Turkish pashas; but now when they have the power, they have manifested towards their Mussulman neighbours a more arbitrary and tyrannical spirit than these Mussulmans ever showed towards them. But I have no wish to judge them harshly. A nation that has for generations been sunk in ignorance and vice cannot be expected all at once to realise the enlightened magnanimity of philosophers. People who have been trampled on will remember it; those who have been injured will retaliate, and those who have been oppressed will not all at once forget. But the Bulgarians in time will take their place amongst the European family of nations, and shake off some of the oppressive characteristics that have recently distinguished them.

The most gratifying and encouraging intelligence that has come from the East of Europe recently is that these independent States have realised their position. They have learned that Russia's interest in their behalf was certainly not disinterested. The Roumanians remember with bitterness that although they came to the assistance of their big neighbours when they were in sad straits before Plevna, their reward has been the loss of one of their most important provinces. The entire tone of feeling throughout these regions is a determination on the part of these States to assert their independence and shake themselves clear of Russian influence and direction. But the most important event that has taken place in Turkey has been the occupation of Bosnia by Austria. This action cannot be justified n the grounds of national right or justice. I certainly ve no wish to extenuate or defend it. It is understood at the clause in the Treaty of Berlin, which assured these

provinces to Austria, owed its authorship to Prince Bismarck and Count Andrassy. Germany contends that the Danube is a German stream—that as she controls its source so should she command its mouth. German colonists are planted along its banks, and their statesmen are unwilling to allow it to pass under the control of Russia. Austria objects to the creation of an independent Slav State on the west, as she has already on her eastern borders. For these dynastic and State reasons, the occupation, or rather the annexation, of these provinces by Austria has been assured. I am not justifying what has been done, and am dealing only with the facts as they are. The occupation of Bosnia by Austria renders the advance of Russia to Constantinople all but impossible. Both political and military reasons combine to prevent her achieving her designs on the great city of the East. The case may be put in a sentence. The design of Russia, as revealed by the Treaty of San Stefano, was to obtain a preponderating influence in the Balkan peninsula. The object of England was to prevent her doing this. The result is that Russia is now farther from the Bosphorus, and less likely to get there, than she has ever been; and this has been accomplished chiefly by the action taken by this country. It has been achieved, too, without the loss of a single English life, or without our setting a single regiment in line of battle.

Of all the strange things that I have heard during this controversy, the strangest is that Russia has achieved a victory, while England has sustained a defeat. We were told this in varying forms almost daily. I do not think anyone else in Europe says so except some English politicians. It is a fact beyond dispute, that the military and aggressive party in Russia are loudly proclaiming that the victories they won with so much difficulty in the field have been abstracted from them in the Council Chamber. They

were dissatisfied with the mode in which the war was commenced and for some time conducted, but the advance of the troops to the neighbourhood of Constantinople consoled them for a season. The Treaty of San Stefano, objectionable as it was regarded by England, was considered by the active party in Russia as incomplete and unsatisfactory. Their complaints against it, however, were mollified by the assurance held out to them that it was only temporary. But when even that unsatisfactory treaty had to be subjected to the revision and alteration of the other European states at Berlin, their discontent assumed an active and threatening attitude. The promulgation of the Treaty of Berlin corresponds with the recommencement of a period of political assassinations and plots. This reveals popular discontent, while the marching and counter-marching of Russian troops, and the massing of such numbers on the German and Austrian frontiers, reveal the state of feeling which pervades the governing class. It is indisputable that, in the estimation of men familiar with Russian society, the Treaty of Berlin has shaken the system of government to its foundation; while the war which Englishmen are so fond of regarding as a triumph for Russia and a discomfiture for this country, is looked upon by Russians as having entailed upon their country a harvest of discontent and disappointment.

To balance the territorial advantages gained by other Powers, we have obtained a more assured position in the Levant. I will not enter into the rather pitiful squabble about Cyprus—whether that island is what the poets of the past have painted it, "the blest, the beautiful, the salubrious, the happy, the dream, and the desire of man," or as it is drawn by the partisan politicians of this country, a fever bed and charnel-house. That it is advantageously situated for guarding the Suez Canal from any danger from the North, and that it affords a favourable starting point

for advancing to the East through the Euphrates Valley, will scarcely be denied by anyone who has impartially examined the subject. Military and naval men maintain that it can be made not only a watchtower, but a depôt for arms and a safe naval station. It is only twenty hours from Port Said, nine from Acre, and six from Beyrout. It is near enough to watch, and close enough to strike, if we required to strike, in defence of our road to the Red Sea and to the Persian gulf. By the Anglo-Turkish convention, England has taken upon herself heavy responsibilities. But if we had not effected that arrangement, the Sultan, like Shere Ali, despairing of help from England, would have thrown himself—reluctantly, no doubt, but still he would have thrown himself—into the arms of Russia; and whatever the result of such a bargain would have been to the people, the greedy pashas would have been secured in their pleasures and possessions. We had, therefore, either to accept the position or permit it to pass into the possession of a rival who, with such a leverage in the centre of two continents, could not only have imperilled our empire in India, but our authority in Europe. We have often entered into treaties with other nations entailing equally onerous obligations. We are bound to defend Greece against Turkey; Portugal against Spain; Belgium against France and Germany. We were bound to defend Denmark, and with culpable cowardice we evaded the responsibility. Under a stringent treaty we are bound to maintain the independence of Sweden and Norway. If Russia should attempt to lease the fisheries in Swedish waters or the pasturage on Norwegian soil, this country is to be informed of the fact, and any attempt on her part to infringe upon the Scandinavian territory we are under engagement to resist by force of arms. We are parties to other treaties, many of them quite as risky as the one we have recently entered into with Turkey; and few of them offer such pros-

pect of achieving such beneficial results as may spring from the Anglo-Turkish Convention.

In Asia Minor there are 700,000 square miles of some of the finest land in the world, washed by three seas, watered by large rivers, and possessing spacious ports and harbours. The soil is capable of producing grain, fruit, and cotton, in abundance, while the hills and the valleys abound in copper, lead, iron, and silver. Much of this fair and fruitful region on which the seasons have lavished all their beauty, and nature all its fragrance, is given over to malaria and to wild beasts—is the gathering ground of predatory Kurds, and the camping place of wandering Arabs. The spot from which the first enterprise of man started—the land around which such a wealth of the romance, the poetry, and the mystery fastens, which has influenced the destinies and formed the characters of not one, but many peoples—is now, from causes partly local and partly foreign, doomed to endure a system of rule which is little less than organised anarchy. We send our surplus population across the Atlantic or to the Antipodes. There is no reason why they should not find a field for their labours, and an outlet for their skill, in a luxuriant land, rich with golden grain and an infinite variety of plants, and fruit, and minerals, within a few hours of our own shores. What has hitherto been wanted is security for life and property. Under the protection that might be, that ought to be, and I trust will be, given by this treaty, these obstacles to colonisation will be removed.

English capitalists and the English Government have always refused seriously to consider the project of a railway through the Euphrates Valley, because they declined to risk such large investments in a country over which they had not sufficient control. This treaty ought to, and I think will, dispense with this difficulty. The railway scheme is described by partisans as utopian and visionary, but that

is a kind of opposition that has grown stale and obsolete. It is not many years ago since the construction of the Suez Canal was, with the approval of English engineers, demonstrated by our townsman, Mr. Robert Stephenson, to be an impossibility, and it was laughed at in the House of Commons by Lord Palmerston as the dream of a crack-brained Frenchman. But the canal is, nevertheless, a great fact. Last year there passed through it between sixteen and seventeen hundred ships with a tonnage of nearly three million tons, and thirteen hundred out of the sixteen were English vessels—a proof of the importance of this waterway to this country. When the scheme of making a railway across the American continent was first promulgated, it was met with characteristic derision, and yet now the line between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, a distance of nearly 2,800 miles, carries thousands of people in the course of a year.

Russians in these matters are somewhat bolder and more enterprising than some Englishmen are. By the combined effect of river and railway, canal and lake, they have nearly united the basins of the Baltic, the Black Sea, and the Caspian. They have revived the old project of diverting the course of the Oxus, and by their system of land and water carriage, commencing at Riga and Warsaw, and terminating not far from the Indian frontier, they hope to secure a preponderating influence in Central Asia. The Euphrates Valley Railway would be 1,200 miles long, and the cost of its construction is estimated at £12,000,000—a comparatively small sum when the amounts invested in railways in this country are considered. I know no more of the future than a prophet, but I think it would be no great venture to hazard the prediction that the railway will be made, and made, too, through English enterprise; that this work will not only act as a breakwater against Northern aggression, and a bulwark for the Indian Empire,

but will be made the fulcrum for raising politically and socially an unfortunate people, and making the early seat of arts and refinement, the theatre of some of the most momentous events in history, once more bloom and blossom as the rose. My contention, in a sentence, is that our external empire should be maintained and defended, as much in the interests of freedom and civilisation as in the interest of England and its distant dependencies; that we cannot honourably and without danger shrink from the responsibilities that our history and our position as the oldest, and one of the chief of free States in the world, entail upon us; that the security of our dominions in the East and the equilibrium of Europe were threatened by the advance of Russia on Constantinople; that the action this country took, although it was open to objection in its details, was necessary, and in the main judicious, that it largely contributed to thwart the dangerous, the aggressive designs of Russia; has protected our present, and made provision for our obtaining an improved way to India, may help to secure better government for Turkey; and has strengthened the influence of England in the councils of Europe.

It is impossible now to discuss at length the policy pursued in Afghanistan, but I wish to express shortly the views I entertain on the action that has been taken in that country. Our Indian possessions are encircled by the ocean on the south, the south-east, and south-west. On the east they are protected by high ranges of mountains and all but impenetrable forests. These mountains and these forests are occupied by savage tribes, who, although capable of great annoyance, as the Nagas are now, are incapable of inflicting any real political or military injury upon us. On the north and north-west our frontiers are the bases of the Himalaya and the Suliman Mountains. It is an accepted canon in military science, that a Power

which holds the mountains and possesses what in soldiers' parlance is called the "issues of the frontier," has an enormous advantage over the Power which occupies the plains. This is an opinion which will scarcely be contested. These mountains are peopled by fierce, warlike, and turbulent tribes, who have no special love for England, but have just as much dislike to each other. They live partly by pasturage, partly by plunder. They fight for their own hand. The only State that has an organised Government of any strength is Afghanistan. As long as those passes and mountains, and the country generally, were occupied by tribes of this character, no danger to India was to be anticipated. Partly brigands, partly soldiers, they could annoy us, and levy blackmail on the adjoining inhabitants, yet they could not seriously disturb or threaten our authority. But it is the accepted opinion of men of all parties—statesmen and soldiers alike—that should this strong military position ever pass into channels of a powerful Government, our exposed frontier would lay us open to serious danger. For years Afghanistan, if not friendly, has at least been neutral; and there was an understanding between Russia and England that that country should be considered as outside of their mutual interest and influence—that it should be regarded as a neutral territory, both being concerned in upholding its independence and neutrality.

The advance of Russia, however, to the East so alarmed the late Ameer that he urged, some years ago, the English Government to enter into closer alliance with him than then existed. He pointed out that Russia was advancing, and did not conceal his fear that, unless he were protected by England, the same fate would overtake him that had overtaken many another Asiatic ruler. Our Government at that time did not share Shere Ali's fears, and refused to comply with the requests that he preferred.

He became discontented; and from having a friendly leaning towards England, he now began to lean towards Russia, and to open negotiations with the Russian commanders in the adjacent provinces. When Russia's objects in Turkey were thwarted by this country, she retaliated by striving to set our Indian frontier in a blaze. No one can complain of her doing so; it is what we would have done, probably, in like circumstances. She objected to our fleet being in the Sea of Marmora, and she thought she would disturb us and distract our attention by assuming a threatening attitude in Afghanistan. A Russian mission was sent. It was received with ostentatious displays of sympathy by the Ameer, and, as far as he was able, he proclaimed that in future he would be the firm friend and ally of Russia, and if not the enemy, at least not the friend of this country.

If not in words, the substance of his declaration and his action at the reception of the Russian mission amounted to this. Our Government required that, as he had received a mission from Russia, he should also accept one from England. He refused to do it, and we attempted to force the mission upon him. It is unnecessary to repeat the facts which are in the recollection, no doubt, of all present. Shere Ali's refusal led to war, and after a small show of resistance he fled from Cabul, and shortly afterwards died. With his son, who was made his successor, we concluded peace, and entered into a treaty. By that treaty, England got the right of sending agents to certain specified districts in Afghanistan, and also obtained an important frontier. Instead of having the base of the mountains as a border, we had the mountains themselves. By that treaty the country should stand. The frontier secured to us by it should be maintained. A most lamentable, melancholy, and disastrous incident occurred in the autumn—the murder of Sir Louis Cavagnari and his suite. But that ought not to divert us from the settled policy that was developed and

expressed by the Treaty of Gandamak. I am in favour of holding the possessions that we have, but we want no more. We have provinces plenty and to spare. Even if we possessed Afghanistan, it would be only a perplexing acquisition; but supposing it were a profitable one, it would be contrary to the wishes and feelings of the Afghans to come under British rule, and I am altogether opposed to enforcing it upon them. The Treaty of Yakoob Khan entered into embodies the policy of the country, and it should be upheld.

I have discussed principles and not personalities. I am not interested either in defending or in decrying any body of men. All I have been concerned for is to state the grounds on which I have been led to support the assertion of what I believe to be Liberal principles and the maintenance of a national policy. It is easy to find fault, and easier still to impute bad motives to your opponents.

> A man must serve his time to every trade
> Save censure. Critics all are ready made.

The shortcomings of the Government are as apparent to me as to the fiercest opponent of their foreign policy. They have often been weak, sometimes vacillating, not unfrequently wrong; but I wish to judge them as I would like them to judge me, or the party with which I am identified, under like circumstances. They have been beset by a succession of difficulties and dangers such as never before encompassed an Administration in our times. Apart from the inherent intricacies of the questions they had to deal with, they have had to contend with the rival interests of other Powers, a strong opposition at home, and some divisions in their own party. It is not generosity, it is simply justice, to remember this. We should also recollect that, in dealing with foreign affairs, there are always some matters that cannot be explained. All Min-

isters are called upon at times to act upon information that they cannot make public.

> What's done we partly may compute,
> But know not what's resisted.

It is possible, even in party warfare, to drive your attacks too far. Unqualified denunciation usually provokes reaction. The Government, which has had the support of large majorities in both Houses of Parliament, is accused of not only being wrong, but of being criminal—not only of being mischievous and mistaken, but of being malevolent and malicious. They are charged with having roamed about the world with incendiary designs, bent upon turning our frontiers into blazing bastions fringed with fire. The accusation is, in my judgment, not only incorrect but foolish. The indictment I would prefer against them would be of the very opposite character. I think they have acted with tameness and timidity. They have been six years in office, and the first half of that time presented them in their normal and natural character. An entire absence of political legislation, some mild but useful social measures, a free and easy administration were their characteristics. Taking warning by their predecessors, their great effort was to avoid needlessly offending anyone. Events that they could not foresee, circumstances which they could not control, have driven them into warlike action. People are easily misled by a cry, but no man who has examined the facts for himself can contend that the English Government started the conflict in Eastern Europe. Whoever else began it—whether it was the Russian emissaries or the Turkish people themselves—certainly Lord Derby, who was then the Foreign Minister of this country, did not do so. He pressed the Sultan to settle the dispute with his subjects, and if that could not be done, he urged him, with somewhat cynical indifference,

to suppress the insurrection. When that failed, he strove to localise the war. It might be said that England should have obeyed the three Emperors and signed the ukase which the imperial league issued from Berlin, and that if Turkey refused to comply with their demands she should have been coerced—in other words that we should have gone to war against her. It is a matter of opinion, but, in the judgment of men familiar with the East, had such a course been pursued, the Turks would have turned their backs to the wall and, with all the disciplined fanaticism of their race, they would have fought against Christian and coalesced Europe for their country and their faith. The resistance that was given in Bosnia to the advance of a friendly Hungarian army strengthens this view. But if the Berlin Memorandum was refused, England assented and took part in the Conference of Constantinople. However we may condemn the course taken by the Government on the Eastern difficulties, no man can fairly say that they caused them. The Afghan war, for which they are more directly responsible, was the outcome of the action of Russia in Turkey. We may fairly criticise the policy of the Government, but no one, I think, can say that they sought a cause of quarrel.

I do not contend that foreign policies are outside the domain of popular and Parliamentary criticism. On the contrary, I regret that for many years the English people have given so little and such fluctuating heed to foreign questions. But I do say that such delicate topics should not be made the battlefield of party. There are two modes of conducting a discussion—one to elicit information, to sustain, to direct and guide the Executive; another to win a party victory out of Government troubles. If the Government of the country is in difficulties abroad, the nation is in difficulties, and it grates as much against my national pride as against my sense of justice to go hunting for

arguments against my political opponents, amongst the stiffening corpses of my fellow-countrymen. On this subject I will quote the opinion of the late M. Thiers, when discussing the attitude taken in France by the Orleanists and the Legitimists during the Crimean War. The veteran French statesman, speaking to M. Nassau Senior, said:—

> "The rules of party warfare allow me to call my opponent a villain, though I know him to be honest; to abuse his measures, though I know them to be useful; to attack his arguments with sophistry and even with falsehood; all this my opponent may do to me, and therefore it is fair that I should do it to him. But we must both of us abstain from using as our battlefield the foreign relations of our country. In these relations an error may be fatal. We may quarrel amongst ourselves; we must be united against the foreigner."

I am not insensible to the benefits of party government. English liberty, in a large measure, owes its stability to such organisation. Successes won by serious and prolonged struggles have been retained by party vigilance. The education gained in such struggles has made the victories permanent. It would be difficult, too, to replace a system that has become so acclimatised to our constitutional life. But party spirit, pushed too far, crushes individuality of thought and cripples independent energy. It impairs the disciplinary value of the suffrage by destroying the voter's sense of responsibility. It lowers the character of the Parliament by converting independent representatives into political automatons, whose value consists in the unreflecting vigour with which they shout the party shibboleth. On points of procedure and of detail, a member may obey the party managers without injury or disadvantage; but when great national issues are at stake, a man forfeits his own respect, and becomes a recreant to his country who ignores his convictions, and submits to [illegible] by deputy or to act by order.

Some of our friends, I think, act somewhat inconsistently on this subject. One of their chief causes of complaint against the present Parliament is its want of independence. They charge it with being an unthinking party machine, and they applauded the action of Lord Derby and Lord Carnarvon when they separated themselves from their colleagues and announced their dissent from their policy. But when Liberals on the other side, acting from equally high motives, separate themselves from their leaders, they are censured, and in some instances, ostracised. What is accounted as commendable independence on the one side, is condemned as an exhibition of fractious selfwill on the other. There are in the House of Commons some thirty or forty members who, more or less, have supported the policy the Government have pursued on foreign questions. But their numbers possibly would have been larger if vote by ballot had been in operation in the House. Their action, however, in this Parliament is only in keeping with the action of other sections of the Liberal party in previous Parliaments. In the last Parliament the Nonconformists and Radicals were dissatisfied with the way the Government dealt with elementary education. The Irish members were discontented with the manner in which they dealt with university education. The hostility of the Irish representatives to the Irish University scheme of the Ministry led to their defeat in Parliament. The opposition of Nonconformists did not cause the defeat, but it certainly contributed to it at the poll. Yet the Ministers who were responsible for this educational legislation are to-day amongst the trusted leaders of the party. In the Parliament before that, stronger differences were developed. Lord Russell introduced a Reform Bill, proposing to give a vote to every man who lived in a house of the value of £7. This moderate proposal was objected to by a section of Liberals, who denounced it as revolution-

ary. Their opposition led to the defeat of Earl Russell's Government, and their subsequent resignation. Lord Russell himself describes this party as consisting of three gangs—the timid, the selfish, and those who were both timid and selfish. For the first, he said, he had pity; the second, indignation; for the third, contempt. During all his long career, he declared that he never encountered a body of politicians so little influenced by principle or animated by a patriotic spirit. The leader of the party he described as a man "sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit." Yet this same leader was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the last Ministry, and is now one of the ablest of the Liberal leaders in the House of Commons.

Another difference took place in the same Parliament which had more beneficial results. The Conservative Government proposed that household suffrage should be made the basis of the Reform Bill. This was objected to by the official Liberals of the day, who wished to have a ratepaying franchise instead of a household. A number of Radicals met in the tea-room of the Parliament House declared that they approved of the principle of the Government Bill, and resolved that if the Ministry would give them an assurance that they would stand by that principle they (the Radicals) would support them. The Ministry did give the assurance, the Radicals did stand to the arrangement; and the result was that household suffrage became the law, notwithstanding the opposition of the official Liberals of the time. The Adullamite defection drove the Liberal Government from office, and the tea-room defection succeeded in making a household suffrage the law of the land. There has never been a Parliament since the Reform Bill where instances of the kind have not ------ed.

policy on foreign questions that I and others in e of Commons have defended is the old policy of

this country. I have no wish to shelter myself behind big names or to shake myself clear of the slightest responsibility. I have too often been in a minority to be afraid of being in that position again. I know what it is to be in the right with two or three. But the policy I have expounded to-night and which I have supported in Parliament, is the policy that was advocated by Mackintosh and Brougham, Horner and Lord Durham; it is a policy that received the approval of the philosophic Liberals Molesworth, Mill, Grote, and Buller. It is the old Radical policy that was expounded by Major Cartwright, Lord Dundonald, William Cobbett, and General Thompson; and it was the common faith of Radicals when I first became interested in political affairs. It is not the faith, I know, of the Manchester School; but it is, certainly, of the early Radicals. I could quote from the speeches and writings of the men whose names I have cited numerous extracts to confirm my statement; but I will content myself with citing, in support of my position, a few words from a statesman whose name will, in every Liberal assembly, be received with favour. Earl Russell for over fifty years played a leading and important part in the history of this country. No one has rendered the Liberal cause more effective service than he has done. He has not boxed the political compass and served all sides in turn. He ended as he began—a moderate and consistent advocate of Liberal principles. In his last work Lord Russell expressed the strong regret he felt at having retired, as he did, from the leadership after the defeat of the party in 1867. The reason why he regretted having retired was the policy the party was led to pursue on foreign matters. The policy that the present Opposition has supported is the policy of the late Government. Lord Russell commended their domestic legislation, but censured in very strong and very emphatic terms their action in foreign matters. These are his words—

> "I had no reason to suppose, when I surrendered the leadership of the party, that he (the Liberal Prime Minister) was less attached than I was to the national honour, less proud than I was of the achievements of our nation by sea and land, that he disliked the extension of our colonies, and that the measure he promoted would tend to reduce the great and glorious empire of which he was put in charge to a manufactory of cotton and cloth, and a market for cheap goods, that the army and navy would be reduced by paltry savings to a standard of weakness and inefficiency. By his foreign policy he has tarnished the national honour, injured the national interests, and lowered the national character."

These are not my words. I never used language anything like so strong, but they are the words of the honoured and trusted leader of the Liberal party for the better part of half a century.

I am not a conventional adherent of the fashionable Liberalism of the hour, but I am a life-long Radical by conviction, sympathy, training, and taste. I am concerned for something more and higher than the transference of the offices of State from one set of men to another. I will not trim my political faith to catch the passing breeze, however pleasant. "Unplaced, unpensioned, no man's heir or slave," I neither look for nor care for the honours, the favours, or the patronising approval lisped " in liquid lines mellifluously bland " of any party. There is only one consolation for a public man, and that is the approval of his conscience and a sense of duty done. I will not knowingly or consciously offend any man by either word or speech, but if I am placed in a position where I must speak, I will speak what I believe to be the truth, temperately, kindly, but plainly. Whatever my lot in life may be, whether I may be a member of the British Parliament again or not, I will labour for the advance of Radical principles, and serve the Liberal cause according to my lights and to the best of my ability. But while I wear the party uniform

I will never wear its plush. I will take my position, however humble, in the ranks, but it will be as a volunteer and not as a lackey. With me the people's welfare is the supreme law, and our country's honour and safety the first consideration. But I prefer national interests to the triumph of a faction. I am weak enough to own that I believe in the now derided obligation of patriotism and the duty of the individual to the State, as one of the first principles planted in the human breast. I know my country's defects, but I cannot join with those who exaggerate and parade them. The land of Michael Angelo and of Dante was not destitute of energy; but when she persistently proclaimed herself to be miserable and infamous through the mouth of Machiavelli, the world took her at her word and trod upon her. Englishmen disposed to decry their native land may remember with advantage the experience of Italy. It is ours to hand down to posterity, undimmed and undiminished, the priceless heritage of a free State, the imperceptible aggregations of centuries won by the struggles of a heroic national life. It was planted, has been reared and watered by the sweat, the tears, the blood of some of the noblest of men. She has carried liberty and laws, art and thought, in triumph round the globe. If England is old she is not decrepit, and has still within her daring and elasticity.

A considerable number of questions were handed up to the chairman.

Mr. Cowen, replying to the first, said: A gentleman asks me, "Did I always entertain the same opinion of Russia?" Yes. I always entertained the same opinion of the designs of the Russian aggressive party, but I am bound to confess—and I do so with entire frankness and candour—that I shared the opinions of many prominent European Liberals that with the defeat of Russia in the Crimea her aggressive career in Turkey was for a time at

least stopped. I do not care to harbour malevolent feelings against any man or body of men, whether Emperors or Republicans, and as the present Czar had certainly not manifested the conquering and restless characteristics of his father towards South-Eastern Europe, I was willing to put the most favourable interpretation on his conduct. After 1856 Russia retreated, so far as Europe was concerned, into a state of diplomatic obscurity. All her efforts were turned to Asia, and it is fair to say that in the early stages these were in the main colonising efforts. But during the last few years a distinct change has come over her action towards Europe, from being quiescent she has become again aggressive and threatening. No sooner did she see France disabled, England, as she thought, incapable, and the rest of Europe indifferent, than she resumed her ancient policy and recommenced her crusade upon Constantinople. You have to judge a Government by its action, and the Russians have put it beyond the possibility of a doubt that the strength of the Western Alliance had alone led her to stay for a season her designs in Turkey. She got more credit for her conduct than subsequent events have shown she deserved.

V.—THE NAVAL DEMONSTRATION IN THE ADRIATIC.

House of Commons, September 4th, 1880.

I have the misfortune, along with some other gentlemen who sit on this side of the House, not to be in entire accord with the Government on their foreign policy. During the session we abstained—I am speaking for others as well as for myself—from provoking discussions that might be inconvenient. We were unwilling, even apparently, to embarrass the diplomatic and administrative action of the Ministry. Although we did not approve of some things that have been done and others that have been spoken, we have been silent. We have been assured, however, on more than one occasion, from the Treasury Bench, that before the session terminated a statement of the course the Government intended to pursue in the East would be submitted to Parliament; and that statement we were led to understand would clear up many doubts. The speech of the noble lord, the Secretary for India, on Thursday night did not fulfil this expectation. The information then imparted was meagre and incomplete. I wish to afford the Government an opportunity at this, the last business sitting of the House, to extend their statement, and as they say they cannot enter into general details I will address to them special questions, to which possibly they can give explicit replies. I know that the task I am undertaking will be distasteful to many present. The thoughts of hon. members are running on other things. It is unreasonable to suppose that they can deeply interest themselves in an abstract dissertation on foreign policy, initiated by an irresponsible outsider like myself, at the close of a prolonged and ex-

hausting session, at an afternoon sitting on a sunny Saturday in September. Still, the question is so important that I must use the only opportunity now afforded me to press it on the consideration of the House.

Let us look at the facts. Parliament is about to rise. For six months the Cabinet will have uncontrolled authority. They will be enabled to use the vast military and naval power of the State, free from the criticisms and comments of the Legislature; and, on the eve of their separation, members are told that the Government have committed themselves to a perilous enterprise which may end in a way they do not intend, and on which they do not calculate. It may produce, indeed, another Navarino. Political memories are never long. People usually forget one week what transpired the previous one. But there must be some gentlemen in the House who have not entirely overlooked the proclamations, the professions, and the promises of the last six months. The charge made against the foreign policy of the last Government was that it was a policy of evasion and equivocation, of mystification and concealment. The Cabinet were accused of forging their designs in secret, and then launching them upon a startled world with theatrical celerity. Their policy at home was summed up in the word "brag," and abroad in the word "swagger." These were in substance the accusations on foreign matters that were pressed with wearying iteration against the last Administration. The present Government came into office to reverse that course of procedure. They were to usher in a reign of righteousness, of peace, and of non-intervention. As that man was healthiest who did not know he had a stomach, so they were sure that that nation was happiest which did not know it had a foreign policy. They were to concern themselves inly, if not exclusively, with domestic affairs and leave angling engagements abroad to more meddlesome states. w have these professions been fulfilled?

The Government has been in office over three months; and I will undertake to say that a less amount of information respecting the action of the Cabinet on foreign matters has been imparted to Parliament during that period than during any similar period in the last six years. A few questions have been addressed to the Ministry from time to time, and the information in reply to them has been doled out in driblets. Now, when within a few hours of the prorogation we are informed that at the instance of England the representatives of the fleets of the great Powers are to rendezvous at Ragusa. They did not gather such a quantity of gunpowder and such a number of guns in an obscure Adriatic port without a purpose. And what is that purpose? The Government are either unwilling or unable to state the design they have in view. It may end in a fiasco and bring in its train humiliation; or, it may end in fighting.

I would like to know what would have been said by peace-loving members to such an enterprise initiated at such a time, and under such circumstances by the last Administration. I could easily conceive—if the Liberals had been sitting on the opposite seats and the Conservatives had held the Treasury Benches—the indignant speeches that would have been delivered. We talk of opposition—that word would convey no description of the tactics that would have been adopted. The "Appropriation Bill" and the other routine measures for terminating the session would have been obstructed violently and determinedly. The privileges of Parliament and the rights of the people would have been appealed to, and it would have been declared again and again that members would not disperse in such a state of uncertainty. Attempts would have been made to drive the Ministry to break through their reticence, and no one would have been more active and energetic in this course of procedure than half-

a-dozen members whom I can easily name. But now the position of parties is reversed these gentlemen are still and silent. What would have been not only wrong but dangerous, if not unconstitutional, when done by one party, is condoned and approved of when done by the other. I own that I do not see the fairness of such reasoning. It is to me a matter of no consequence what party is in power. If they adopt a line of action calculated to endanger the best interests of the State I will to the best of my ability oppose it. It is matterless to me whether it is done by political friends or foes.

I suppose the object of the threatened gathering of destructive mechanism at Ragusa is to terrify the Turks. But suppose the Turks will not be terrified? What then? Is the naval power of free and constitutional England to be used for the purpose of burning or beating down the huts of the Albanian huntsmen, fishermen or herdsmen, on the harbourless coast of the Adriatic? Is that the ignoble purpose to which the might of Britain is to be applied? But even if this proposed pressure is not found to be sufficient, is Constantinople to be blockaded and bombarded? I do not know, I have no means of knowing, more than any ordinary person knows; but it has been said abroad, on what appears to be fair authority, that such a project has at least been discussed. The forcing of the Dardanelles and the carrying of coercion to the Turkish capital is said to be at least a possibility, but it has got no further than a suggestion.

And what is all this for? It is to secure additional territory to the little State of Montenegro. It is far from my intention to speak in terms of disparagement of any country however small, or of any people however powerless; but it is right for us to have before our minds the extent of the country and the character of the race on whose behalf we are asked by the Government to run such

large risks. Montenegro is a State on the East Coast of the Adriatic, about the size of a moderate English county. It has a few more inhabitants than the borough I have the honour to represent in this House. The gross annual revenue is under £30,000 a year, and half of this is supplied from abroad. £15,000 is given as subsidies by foreign Governments, £12,000 by Russia, and £3,000 by Austria. The Prince receives from the Montenegrin inhabitants £350 a year, but that amount is made up by the Czar to £3,500. This Montenegrin Prince therefore is really in the pay of Russia, and the State is little more than an outpost of that Empire. Its surface is sterile and mountainous. There is a story common on the Dalmatian coasts that when the gods were busy scattering stones upon the earth a bag of boulders burst over Montenegro, and that accounts for the unusual prevalence of rocks. The people have been described by Lord Palmerston as being the worst savages in Europe. They have been described more recently by the present Prime Minister as a highland and heroic race. Highland truly they are, but their heroism is, I fear, somewhat damaged by their brutality. They are unquestionably courageous, and fight with commendable bravery for their independence. But their warfare has been in the past of a rather repulsive character. The Montenegrins were accustomed to cut off the heads of the men they slew in battle and sometimes of their prisoners, and the skulls of their slain enemies were hung about the walls of the Montenegrin houses alongside the implements of war and the chase. As the American Indians preserved the skulls of their enemies, the Montenegrins preserved the skulls of theirs as trophies of their victories. They were regarded as proofs of their old men's valour and used as incentives to the young warriors to follow the example of their fathers. No doubt the country would be benefited if it could be brought into closer contact with

the outer world by having free access to the sea. This would be a distinct gain, and one which every liberal and generous man would desire to see realised. It would have a softening influence upon the Montenegrin character. It would also be well if, in addition to their mountains, they had some low-lands where their cattle could be fed with greater ease and with less labour. A portion of the people are engaged either as brigands or as soldiers. Unable to raise sufficient food on their sterile soil they are driven to levy blackmail and to commit acts of pillage on their neighbours. But while I admit the force of this reasoning, and the wisdom of its being complied with, I altogether deny the right or the wisdom of this country giving to Montenegrins territory that belongs to others.

The Montenegrins are surrounded by another people —who are equally as brave, and whose history stretches back into the mists of time. The Albanians are the very oldest people in the Levant. They were there before the ancient Greeks. They have legends, language, and characteristics of their own. They have some of the adverse features of the Montenegrins, but they are quite as courageous, and their love of independence is unquestioned and as unquestionable. What the powers propose to do is to take the land of the Albanians and hand it over to the Montenegrins without the approval or consent of the Albanians. (An hon. member: "They are not a nationality.") Not a nationality, my hon. friend says. That was Prince Bismarck's remark at Berlin. He said he did not know of the existence of the Albanian nation. Prince Bismarck did not know of the nationality of Denmark, or of Holland either. Another Prince, quite as potent then as Prince Bismarck is now, contended at the Congress of Vienna that he did not know of the nationality of Italy: in that statesman's opinion Italy was merely "a geographical expression." And yet we all know that Italy

to-day is a great and united nation. What has come true of the people on one side of the Adriatic in little more than fifty years may also come true in a modified sense of those on the other side in a like period. There are bitter race feuds between the Montenegrins and the Albanians. They are members not only of a distinct nationality, but they are of a different religion. It is, in my opinion, as unjust to subject the Albanians to the domination of the Montenegrins as it would be to subject the Montenegrins to the domination of the Albanians. The proposition is to take the more fertile valleys and the few harbours that are to be got on the Adriatic from the Albanians, and give them to their enemies; so that the Albanians, if the arrangement is carried out, will be in exactly the same position as that now complained of by the Montenegrins. They would be injuring one people to benefit another. The district of Dulcigno, which is at present in controversy, contains between 8,000 and 9,000 Mahomedans, 3,000 or 4,000 Roman Catholics, and from 1,200 to 1,500 gipsies, and about 1,500 Slavs of the Greek Church. It is proposed to hand over the government of these 14,000 or 15,000 people of different religions and races to the 1,400 or 1,500 Slavs, and this is to be done in the name of the principle of nationalities. I own I am unable to see the justice of such a course of procedure.

No one in the House more warmly upholds the cause of nationality than I do; but I repudiate our right or the right of Europe to trample on a people merely because its faith is unorthodox and its civilisation Asiatic. We have recently had roused in this country quite a fervour in favour of nationalities. Its growth has been sudden, and its extent suspiciously limited. These people have no end of sympathy for Slav nationality, for Bulgar—or Montenegrin—or the Serb—but they have very little care for the nationality of rival peoples. The Turk or the Ma-

homedan may die in the ditch there—the polygamous and deistical heretic that he is—he may die without a groan, die without a sigh, so that his emancipators, his Christian emancipators and liberators, may live in peace and aggrandise their dominions at his expense. The advocates of the partial application of the principle of nationalities should remember that

> "Tawny skins and dark complexions
> Cannot forfeit nature's claim."

Creeds may differ, but affection, and right of nationality dwell with Turk and Slav the same.

Our Government has specially espoused the cause of nationalities and I rejoice in it. But their course is inconsistent and erratic. It is rather a surprising circumstance to find a Government that rules India talking of nationalities. They are fond enough of nationalities for the Bulgars, but they have small concern for the nationality across the Irish Sea. There they have a distinct nation with boundaries clearly enough marked, and they not only refuse it autonomy, but any form of self-government. Yet the Administration that does this sets itself up as the special champions of nationalities. I am told that the cession of the territory to Montenegro was in accordance with the decision of the Congress in Berlin. I quite admit it. The Sultan had bound himself to give additional territory to the Montenegrins, and he ought to fulfil his engagements however unpleasant or however difficult. But as showing the ignorance that exists even in the highest quarters as to that part of Europe, the history of this ntenegrin extension may be recited. Gibbon said at his ie that the interior of Albania was as little known as the frica, and it would almost appear that what Gibbon's day is true now. By the Treaty a certain territory was awarded to Montevas found at Berlin that this territory was

occupied exclusively by Mahomedans and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to hand them over to the little State without much bloodshed. A new strip of land was then marked out for surrender to them. But the statesmen and military men merely took the Austrian military map and ran a line across certain hills and certain valleys, and said, "This much goes to Montenegro and the other is to be retained by Turkey." But they took no account of the people who lived in these valleys. They found, upon examination, that as the people conceded by the Treaty of San Stefano were Mahomedans, so those conceded by the Treaty of Berlin were mainly Roman Catholics. So that arrangement also had to be set aside. Count Corti hit upon a compromise, and a not altogether unsatisfactory one, but there were difficulties even in the way of its fulfilment. And now our Government are insisting upon the surrender of the district of Dulcigno which I have just referred to. The change that has been made in surrendering the different slips of territory show the difficulty of dealing with the question with a due regard to the interests and rights of all parties concerned.

The Turks are blamed for their dilatoriness in fulfilling the engagements. I have no wish whatever to stand here in any sense as an apologist of the Turkish Government. Their doings have put them beyond defence. Their corruption and slothfulness, and their extravagance have rendered even apologies for them impossible. There is little that the Prime Minister has said in condemnation of the orthodox government of the pashas and the palace that I am not prepared to endorse. What I contend for is that injustice should not be done to the people of Turkey because of the sins and crimes of the governing classes in the country. My contention is that, heretics though they are, they are as much entitled to consideration as their Christian, or professedly Christian, neigh-

bours are. I cannot emphasise too strongly the declaration that it is sympathy with the common people of Turkey—who have suffered more than the outlying Christian population—and not sympathy with the governing caste that I have. But while saying this, I am equally bound to say that the Sultan on this Montenegro question has not acted unfairly. He strove to surrender the territory awarded by the Treaty of Berlin, and sent for the purchase of the cession one of the ablest statesmen and greatest generals—Mehemet Ali. But the distinguished soldier and his suite were murdered by the Albanians. Rather than comply with the orders from Constantinople, they killed their own countrymen. It was not want of will so much as want of power on the part of Turkey to do what was asked of her. I have no doubt the Porte would be very glad to be quit of the difficulty, but in getting quit of it they do not wish to drive their own subjects into insurrection. On another occasion, when the Turks surrendered the forts along the Montenegrin border, the Montenegrins were unable to take possession of them. If there had been any serious desire on the part of the people in these districts to join this Montenegrin State, the withdrawal of the Turkish soldiers would have enabled them to do this. The contention was that these people were kept in subjection by Turkey. The Turks, however, withdrew, and yet, notwithstanding, the people clung to their rule and refused to be annexed to Montenegro. What Europe wished to do was to compel Turkey to fight against her own people and hand them over against their will to a race and government they disliked if not detested.

With respect to the Treaty of Berlin, I deny, too, that ere is anything in that treaty that required the Powers onjoint action to enforce its provisions. The compromise. It prescribes certain territory to dered by Turkey and certain advantages to be

conceded to her. But when Prince Gortschakoff sought to induce the Congress to enter into an engagement for giving military effect to these provisions, all the representatives of the Congress refused to agree to his proposal. None did this more emphatically than the representatives of this country. Prince Bismarck said that all the Congress was called upon to do was to mark out certain arrangements which it deemed desirable for the East of Europe to be made, and then leave the fulfilment to the steady operation of time and influence of circumstances. He protested, and so did Count Andrassy, against any forcible application being made to apply these provisions lest by that very application of force the whole arrangements of the treaty might be endangered. But when the Government does seek to apply military and naval pressure for this purpose it is right that its application should be equal—that while it obtains the fulfilment of the conditions that are against Turkey, it should be equally used to secure the conditions that are made in her favour. And this leads me to ask the Government to state whether the conditions prescribed with respect to Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia as well as those respecting Montenegro are also to be enforced by the concerted action of the Powers. I would like to know from the representative of the Foreign Office if the Government could give any information as to the unusual and extraordinary migration of Russian soldiers to the Balkan States. It is said that 80,000 stands of arms and 30,000 Russian soldiers have recently gone to Bulgaria. These soldiers and these munitions of war could only be sent there for one purpose, and that purpose would be aggressive and offensive. Are the Government in a position to state that the use to be made of this warlike material and these warlike men is not a like use to that made of a like migration into Servia a few years ago? Do they not point to further assaults upon the Mahomedan population? The Under

Secretary said some time ago, in answer to a question from the member for Rochester, that a proposal had been made to the Government by another Power to the effect—supposing that the Turkish Government fulfilled all the conditions of the Treaty of Berlin, was England prepared to join the other Powers in declaring that no further concessions should be asked for from her? I know that it was not an absolute guarantee that was suggested by Germany, but it was a general undertaking that if the treaty engagements were fulfilled, for a time at least the Ottoman Empire should not be further harassed.

These are the three points on which I desire information from the Ministry. First, whether the naval power of England, if used for the service of Montenegrin nationality, would not be used to the disservice and detriment of the Albanian nationality? Second, whether any further arrangement has been made as to the proposed engagement with respect to protecting the remnants of the Turkish Empire? Third, whether the suspicious action of Russia in Bulgaria and Roumelia has received the attention of the Ministry? I think it would be possible for the Government to give the country information on these points, without embarrassing them in any action with the other Powers. So far as the Treaty of Berlin is concerned, I join with the Ministry in believing in the necessity for effect being given to it. There are two ways, however, of carrying out a bargain. Its fulfilment may be made to press with undue severity on one of the parties and with great leniency on the other. My fear is that as the Ministry have never been heartily favourable to the Berlin Treaty, they are now disposed to a somewhat inequitable fulfilment of it. ("No, no," from Mr. Gladstone). I know quite well that the Prime Minister has not condemned the treaty in such an unqualified way as some of his colleagues have done. (Lord Henry Lennox: "The Home Secretary.") Yes, the Home

Secretary and other members of the Government have spoken in terms of unqualified censure and condemnation of that instrument. They have ridiculed it, and declared, not once, but frequently, that the retention of any form of Mahomedan rule, even for the Mussulman population west of the Bosphorus, was not only impossible, but undesirable. They sought not only the overturning of the Porte—which is a point on which I, to a large extent, agree with them—but also the subjugation of the Turkish to the Slav race.

In estimating the value of the Treaty of Berlin, you should calculate not only what was accomplished by it, but the obstacles there were in calling it into existence. The settlement of the oldest, the greatest and the most complex international problems in Europe, one involving the destinies—material, political, and religious—of millions of people, was not an undertaking that could be adjusted offhand, as they could do a railway bill in that House. In the classic lands dealt with in the Treaty of Berlin, there meet the conflicting civilisations of the East and the West—the one iconoclastic and progressive, the other traditional and conservative. There comes there into collision all variety of races and religions—the Hebrew, the heathen, the Greek, the gipsy, and the Slav—men of all faiths, as well as men of no faith. At the junction of opposing streams you have formed debateable deltas, erratic eddies, and cross-currents. So, in Turkey, there are run together territory that has been the battle-ground of the world for ages, the representatives of an all but exhausted past and of an aggressive present. War and diplomacy, sentiment and interest, the principle of nationality and the prejudices of sectarianism, have all been tried; but it has baffled the ingenuity of generations of statesmen to find a solution for the many complex problems that are bound up in the Eastern Question. The long existence of the loosely

organised Turkish Empire is itself a monument and symbol of that failure. The Porte, though not a system of Government that can be defended, has heretofore found a fairly working substitute for the object of that fruitless search. It is unreasonable to expect that any congress of Government, or series of Governments, could clear off all at once the legacy of sectarian hate and of race jealousy that centuries of injustice and misrule have bequeathed to the present generation. All that can be done by such an arrangement is to help forward the settlement, and this I contend the Treaty of Berlin has done. In sitting in judgment upon the finding of that document, we should recollect not only the intrinsic difficulties of the question dealt with, but the rival interests of the parties concerned. When we remember these difficulties—the intricacies of the East, the jealousies of other nations, the divisions always active and sometimes exacting we have at home—I think we may fairly regard the solution arrived at two years ago at Berlin as not unsatisfactory. It is not what many of us wanted; it is not what many of them expected. But, given the circumstances, and admitting the conditions, the award is, taking it all round, not unfair. I rejoice, therefore, that the Government has resolved to give effect to that agreement. In their efforts to do this they would receive, if impartial, the encouraging support of all shades of politicians in this country. I recognise clearly the difficulties of their position, and am willing to make all allowance for them. It is the interest of all parties to lend the Government help in seeking the fulfilment of this Treaty. But, again, I wish to declare that to seek the fulfilment of one side of the Treaty, and not the fulfilment of the other, would be to prevent the realisation of the advantages that it would otherwise confer. At the same time, it would be an injustice to unoffending and helpless people, and it might, if pushed too far, be a danger to Europe.

VI.—POLITICAL ORGANISATION; MONTENEGRO, GREECE, AND IRISH GRIEVANCES.

Town Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, January 3rd, 1881.

On the last occasion that I attempted to address a political meeting in this hall, I had the misfortune to meet with an accident, which, for a season, disabled me. Many questions that were then contested with much warmth have since been shelved or settled by that common arbitrator—Time. To go back upon them now would be like recalling a chapter of ancient history. But there are two points on which I disagreed with some of my friends that it is necessary to notice. They may arise again, and it is right that there should be a clear and frank understanding upon them between myself and the people of Newcastle. If agreeable relations are to be maintained between a member and his constituents there must exist between them mutual candour, confidence, and equality. These conditions can be secured without any exhibition of arrogance on the one hand or of servility on the other. With some electors it was a source of regret, and with others of surprise, that at the general election I did not commit my candidature to the organised Liberals of the borough. Others complain that I have not shown more cordiality for associative party action. My first reply to these regrets and complaints has but a transitory application. The second is more wide-reaching in its character. At the dissolution I was in the unfortunate position of being out of harmony with the majority of Liberals on the pressing question of the hour. While resolved to maintain untrammelled my own opinion I wished

to respect the opinion of those who differed from me. This, in my judgment, could only be done by acting independently. Unhappy displays of party temper—inevitable, perhaps, under the tension of the time—lend temporary friction to our intercourse. But these personal disagreements have, so far as I am concerned, been long since consigned to dumb oblivion, and our peculiar political differences may also be relegated to the limbo of exhausted or unsettled political feuds.

I have, however, an abiding objection to modern electioneering machinery, which I wish to express with all brevity but with all precision. Organisation, when carried too far, becomes tyrannical, and ends either by defeating the purposes for which it was designed, or by creating evils peculiar to itself. Shelley's father-in-law, the author of a work that was once the text-book of English Radicalism, when warning the poet against joining a political association, told him that he might "as well tell the adder not to sting or use questions with a wolf; as well forbid the mountain pines to wag their high tops, and make no noise when fretted with the gusts of heaven," as expect organisations of any kind to be fair to those who differed from or opposed them. This is a severe verdict, and one not likely to meet with acceptance in an age conspicuous for the disparagement of individualism and the deification of combinations. Experience proves that the most effective way for persons desirous of securing specific, constitutional, or social changes is to band themselves together for the advocacy of such ends. Societies like the Anti-Corn Law League, established for the purpose of obtaining the adoption of prescribed programmes, and which, when these programmes are achieved, dissolve, are commendable exhibitions of popular union and spirit. Members of learned fessions, followers of the same trade, may also advaneously combine to protect their interests. But per-

manent organisations for shouting the shifting shibboleth of fluctuating political factions, stunt the growth of speculation, restrict the range of inquiry, and crystallise political thought. The State should have the advantage of the matured, dispassionate, and unbiassed judgment of every informed citizen. But excessive organisation destroys individual elasticity and hammers and hardens all variety of opinion into a mechanical mass, which thinks only with the brains and sees only with the eyes of recognised, but often self-chosen, chiefs. This country is ruled alternately by two currents of opinion—one feverish, fervid, and formidable, which is political; another sluggish and steady, which is social. In periods of excitement the former current carries all before it. In quieter days the latter assumes supremacy. Amidst the passions of an election, political opinion wields undisputed authority. But when the people become fatigued with the "monotony of their own energy," social influences reassert themselves. Popular concern in the details of politics cannot be sustained, but the vigilant managers of associations retain power, and from their activity often succeed in impressing their will rather than the will of the electors upon the constituencies. These remarks apply to all organisations, to all parties, and to all times.

It is right, however, to remember that recent constitutional changes have rendered combination, within limits, more requisite than formerly. The original object of these new bodies was to select candidates. Under a restricted suffrage this was usually done by a coterie of irresponsible local politicians. With an enlarged electorate it became necessary to broaden the consultative body. If these associations had confined themselves to this work, they would have been worthy of all approbation, but when they aspired to select not only candidates for seats in the Imperial Parliament, but candidates for seats in all local corporations;

when, too, they essayed the direction of all these divers contests, they entered upon a course that may become dangerous to civil liberty. They aimed at the creation of an electoral oligarchy to control the constituencies. To push political differences into every pursuit, to split asunder our municipal assemblies by fierce polemical discussions—would lessen the amenities of life, and embitter social intercourse. By compelling candidates to permit them to direct their contests these new organisations have multiplied the risks of electioneering indefinitely. Any candidate that accepts the services of an electoral association renders himself responsible for the doings of every member of that association. An association may number two thousand members, and the candidate who takes its help places himself at the mercy of every one of these two thousand men. Electoral law is subtle, complicated, and contradictory. It is full of traps. Nothing is more easy than for ill-informed, injudicious, and impetuous canvassers to fall into one of them. The difference between a candidate entrusting his cause to an association and fighting the election independently is well illustrated by the contests at Westbury and Bewdley. In both cases there were petitions. At Westbury, although there was clear proof of bribery having been resorted to by the winning party, the judges did not unseat the member, but they recommended the prosecution of the offending electors. The bribers were not in any way officially connected with the candidate, and for their conduct he could not be justly held answerable. The men who bribed were therefore punished, but the election was not voided. But at Bewdley the candidate placed himself in the hands of the Liberal association. Two members of that body were found to have broken the law. The judges held that they were agents, and the member lost his seat. If petitions had been presented, and the law had been applied as rigidly in any of our northern constituen-

cies as it was at Bewdley, few association candidates would have escaped. It is all but impossible to conceive of an election being conducted without conscious or unconscious breaches of the law when the agents of the candidate are numbered by hundreds. I don't doubt that these associations helped to secure the return of the majority got by the Liberals at the last election, but they are a many-edged weapon, which can cut in several, and may cut in some very unexpected and undesirable directions. Of all the troubles that beset a member's existence, only one surpasses that of a contest, and that is a petition. The expense, the annoyance, the uncertainty attending such trials are so harassing that I think it will be found, now that the law of agency is better known, that many candidates will adopt the course I pursued, in face of much misunderstanding and some opprobrium last spring. The Ministry are pledged to attempt the reformation of our electoral system. I trust they will reform it boldly and radically. Our corrupt, costly, and demoralising plan of electioneering is a blot upon our representative system, a heavy and unjust tax upon candidates, and a scandal and opprobrium upon our boasted political purity, independence, and intelligence.

Another complaint preferred against me has been my general indifference to party interests. Party, in its best sense, may not be what Pope says it is—

> The madness of many for the gain of the few,

although history teems with instances supporting the poet's definition. It may not either be, as some think, the wisdom of many for the gain of the whole. But it is certainly true that controversy, by filtering the turbid currents of political opinion " through certain strainers well refined," evokes truth. Freedom, too, has often caught " its form, its temper, and its strength " amidst the whirlwinds of political passion. But while admitting the

general force of the plea put in for party rule, while granting that men often act more purely and from higher motives when they act together on a common understanding than when they act individually and for personal ends, and while allowing, too, the necessity of assaulting the strongholds of power and corruption with all the force of unbroken unity, it is necessary that the limits of party thought and authority should be carefully prescribed. It should not extinguish freedom of thought, speech, or speculation. Its programme should not be encumbered by needless details, or overloaded with subordinate issues. Party interests are not the only, nor are they the highest, interests that a politician has to care for. Behind the party, there is the State, and behind the State there is the individual. "There is a higher law than the Constitution." Party prizes may have a high value in the eyes of some, but there are nobler dignities than office can confer. Glitter and gold lace at best are but tawdry trappings, which must be unbearable if their carriage covers a forfeiture of cherished beliefs. Every man must act according to his convictions. They are his safest, and ought to be his only guide. Upon matters of detail he may subordinate his opinion to his associates. The majority in such cases may guide him; but upon questions of principle he must stand firm, even if he be as one against one thousand. In the application of a principle, there may be opportunity and necessity for concession. Legislation is a practical science, and it is modified by traditions, customs, and institutions. Difficulties may arise as to where acquiescence in party demands should terminate, and where individual independence should assert itself. In such cases each man must judge for himself. Some, with equal honesty, may go further in support of party than others. Party exigencies not unfrequently conflict with the higher claims of political morality. Honourable men sometimes conceive themselves

justified in deflecting from the more exalted standard, and making heavy mental sacrifice for party, or what they may deem political necessity. A generous constituency will uphold a representative who acts upon his own sense of duty, even though, in their view, he may have fallen into error. Men of strong beliefs may be open to the charge of being sometimes unreasoning, hot-headed, and prejudiced; but in all great national emergencies it is the men who make a conscience of their work, the men who have not only convictions, but the courage to act upon them, that can be trusted.

In recent years there has been a tightening of party cords. The number of unattached politicians is perceptibly reduced. The majorities on either side are usually so strong that they have become practically despotic. In the Parliament of 1868, the Liberals overwhelmed the Conservatives. In that of 1874 the position was reversed. We have now recurred to the state of affairs that prevailed ten years ago. Our party managers divide the electors into two camps. They would have them to think as well as act in battalions. All are right on the one side, and all are wrong on the other. They overlook the possibility of both the regular parties being mistaken, and of there being many unenslaved by party ties who are indifferent to the ascendency of either section. In the House of Commons chosen immediately after the passing of the first Reform Bill, there was a phalanx of men distinguished for their literary, philosophic, and scientific attainments, for their purity of purpose, loftiness of aim, and for the depth and disinterestedness of their convictions. Grote, Thompson, Hume, Molesworth, Burdett, and their colleagues in Parliament were sustained by Mill, Fox, Bowring, Fonblanque, and others out of it. These men represented an order of political thought that has few adherents and fewer spokesmen now. They stood steadily and strictly on the ground

of principle. They were impervious to official temptations. No sordid considerations influenced their decision. While anxious to see Liberal men in office, they only cared for this in so far as they saw in the Ministers security for the cause they laboured to promote. They worked together irrespective of the interests of party. They believed in measures which related to, or depended upon, broad democratic doctrines of Government. They were troublesome, no doubt, to the Administration of the day, but their influence on national life was purifying, inspiriting, and elevating. Their exertions made a date in history, marking one of those memorable conjunctions by which we calculated the progress of human freedom. They were the immediate successors of the advanced thinkers who found voice through the stormy invocations and the passion-woven stanzas of Byron, the dreamy and melodious prophecies of Shelley, the broad philosophy of Godwin, the trenchant common-sense of Paine, the chivalrous patriotism of Major Cartwright, and the sledge-hammer eloquence of William Cobbett. But Radicalism, as expounded by these Fathers of the Faith, has become a tradition merely. An elastic and accommodating Liberalism, which may mean this, that, or t'other thing, or anything or nothing, has swamped the sturdy Radicalism of fifty years ago. Here and there a Radical of the old type may be found, but he lives in the midst of a population that does not understand him. A Fifth Monarchy man would hardly be more out of place, or an acknowledged member of the Commune could hardly more excite the aversion of many modern Liberals. The inheritors of the honoured name of this school of politicians—for it was a school rather than a party—have become Ministerialists. They give a passive acquiescence to everything which emanates from the Liberal leaders. "When the dew of youth was fresh upon me," I espoused the principles, and became enamoured of the teachings

of these apostles of philosophic democracy. Amidst every vicissitude of fortune and life I have striven to be faithful to their traditions, and to uphold—I only know too well at how great a distance—their policy and expound their creed. But a generation has arisen that "does not know Joseph." They conceive all independent thought heresy —all generosity to opponents weakness, and all action outside the orthodox party lines as flat blasphemy. They are puzzled and alarmed when praise or blame is dispensed discriminately, when a man's principles don't turn with the tide and the times, when more regard is shown for measures than for men, for truth than for victory. Perhaps time may subdue, and experience may temper, their displeasure. But be that as it may, my resolve is taken. I will follow only those who carry the flag, and march to the music of freedom.

The exaggeration and the unfairness of partisanship were well exemplified by the querulous attitude assumed even by responsible politicians when the country was in all the throes of foreign troubles. For centuries the Eastern problem, out of which these troubles arose, has occupied the thoughts of philosophers and disturbed the deliberations of statesmen. It involves deep and delicate diplomatic, dynastic, and national interests. The political, social, and religious destinies of millions are bound up in it. It is a struggle for a slice of border land, the possession of which will give to any owner a preponderating and dangerous authority over the military, moral, and material issues of two continents. It is the confluence of competing forms of civilisation, where the devotees of conflicting creeds and the adherents of antagonistic social systems have for ages wrestled for mastery, and where national hatreds have been intensified by the cruelty and the injustice of successive conquerors. The soil which is the scene of this internecine strife is split into settlements

as confusing as the interwoven ridges of cotter tenements on a Connemara mountain. The adjustment of the claims for supremacy in this political pandemonium, which has baffled the ingenuity of generations of rulers, and will continue to vex their successors as long as the common passions of human nature move men to action, was made a question of party. Points of detail affecting a distant and little known land that could only be debated with effect after careful study and in the light of extended knowledge, were factiously fought over by many who had never given the subject one serious thought till it was cast into the boiling cauldron of electoral passion. The immediate purpose for which this furious controversy was started having been accomplished, the agitating interest in it has subsided, and it is gradually dropping into the background, where it will probably remain till a fresh faction fight forces it once more to the front.

I have often and fully expounded my views on this question. It is unnecessary to recapitulate them. From the first I maintained that the compromise arrived at at Berlin, although objectionable in its details, was a vast improvement on the treaty drafted at San Stefano, and that under the circumstances it was the best arrangement that could have been effected. It was one, too, that if honestly and equitably worked out, might for a season oil the creaking wheels of Oriental statecraft, and be made the basis on which to build a further period of peace. The contract with respect to Cyprus and Asia Minor, I held, was capable of being enforced for the service and the safety of the British Empire, the well-being of the native population, and the special benefit of India. Russia, by the treaty, had been prevented from destroying a State which it had been the combined care of Europe to uphold, not for its own merits, but as the keystone of the the European system. The forward position se-

cured to Austria was such as to enable her to bar the aggressor's advance to the Bosphorus. The treaty also secured for the new Danubian States freedom from Muscovite tutelage, and opened out to them an opportunity for entering the circle of free nations. England, when she resisted the arbitrary demands of Russia, and insisted on her submitting the terms she had extracted under terror from the Porte to the collective consideration of the Powers, was in my judgment not only defending her own interests but the interests of civilisation and freedom. She was standing up for the rights of the weak against the strong, for the rule of justice and not force in determining international difficulties; for the balance and independence of nations against the caprice, greed, and grasping ambition of a military autocracy.

These views were stoutly opposed by many Liberals at the time, and those who took the course I did were subjected to no small measure of party vituperation. The Treaty of Berlin was first denounced as unjust, and then ridiculed as unworkable. The cession of Cyprus was laughed at, and pledges were given by more than one Cabinet Minister that the repudiation of the Convention with Turkey would be one of the earliest steps towards a saner diplomacy that would be taken by the Liberal Administration. Austria—not the Austria of Metternich or Haynau, but the Austria of Andrassy—was denounced in unmeasured language, and in terms of offensive menace. She was warned to keep her "hands off." How have these electioneering threats and platform pledges been redeemed? The despised treaty has been found to be so valuable a basis of European policy—that every clause in it, except such as make for Turkey's favour, is to be put in force with Shylock-like exactness. Cyprus, alternately described as a howling wilderness and a charnel house, is never referred to.

Oh, no, we never mention her,
Her name is never heard;
Our lips are now forbid to speak
That once familiar word.

The Convention, with all its mad, if not wicked, responsibilities, is undisturbed. Austria has been soothed by an apology, and both her hands and her harbours have been utilised in the recent assault upon the nationality of Albania.

In this hurly-burly age, when the doings of to-day crowd out all recollections of yesterday, it is difficult for those who do not follow closely the course of affairs to grasp the full measure of the change that has taken place in popular thought and feeling in a few short months. If you will summon up remembrances of a year ago, and contrast the temper then shown and the arguments then used with that shown and those used now, when these questions are debated, you may not be unwilling to admit that rebellious Radicals like myself, who did not follow the more taking side in those transactions, were not, after all, so far wrong. You may realise, too, how the weight and responsibility of office sobers men's judgments and exorcises polemical acerbity from their speech. The cardinal difference between the two Eastern policies lay in the application or the non-application of force. When the Sultan refused to comply with the findings of the Constantinople Conference, leading Liberals advocated the application of force to compel him. They contended that if our ironclads were moored in sight of his palace, and if his Asiatic ports were blockaded, he would tamely submit to the demands of Europe. All that was required to be done, it was argued, was to threaten long and to threaten loud, and the Pashas would cry "Peccavi." The late Government took the opposite view. They held that although Turkey might yield to force she would not yield to threats, and

that to threaten without meaning to fight was undignified, and might be dangerous. History shows that whilst the Turks have many times surrendered provinces after being worsted in battle, they have resisted all direct attempts by Christian Powers to meddle in the internal affairs of their polyglot empire. You may beat, you may break, but you will find it difficult to bend these poverty-stricken, but lordly and fanatical, Ottomans. At the instance of our Government coercion has been tried for the purpose of obtaining what was really an unsecured remnant of the last war. And with what success? After an extravagant expenditure of diplomatic paper, ambassadorial patience, and demonstrating gun-powder, after no end of sailing and counter-sailing of a mighty armada, and a dangerous approach to fighting, the co-operative and coercive mountain has brought forth a mouse. Turkey, bleeding, broken, and bankrupt, with few friends and no credit, torn by internal dissensions, harassed by greedy neighbours, and borne down by disaster, managed to trouble the whole of Europe for months over the cession of an insignificant fishing village. Is it not reasonable to suppose that had force been applied to her three years ago, when her army was unbeaten and her stores unexhausted, her resistance would have been more tenacious and more prolonged?

And what was this Adriatic demonstration for? In 1878, Dulcigno was taken by the Montenegrins. By the Treaty of San Stefano the place was ceded to its conquerors. But when Russia was compelled to lay her stolen goods on the table of that Council Chamber at Berlin and submit to have her Treaty revised by Europe, the place was given back to the Turks, because—mark the reason—it was found that between the inhabitants and the Montenegrins there was bitter and unsurmountable enmities. Union between the two people was deemed by

the Plenipotentiaries to be impossible. Montenegro, therefore, had another district granted her in lieu of Dulcigno; but here again the irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces forebade incorporation. The two parties were haggling in Eastern fashion as to what territory should be transferred when the present Ministry came into office. England then assumed the lead in the negotiations, and demanded peremptorily that the old Russian scheme should be reverted to, and that the Dulcignoites should be handed over to their hereditary enemies. Turkey never denied her obligation to yield up some territory, and always protested her willingness to keep her bargain; but she hesitated to force people who desired to remain under her dominion to go under the dominion of an alien, a hostile, and a hated race. And her hesitation was not only natural but honourable. The Powers, at the instance of England, threatened to open fire on the harmless hamlet, for it was nothing better, if it was not transferred to Prince Nicholas. This prince is really rather a Russian stipendiary than an independent chief. He draws more than half his salary from the Czar, and is as much under the control of the Russian Government as the Governor of Malta is under the control of the English Government. Powder, plenty to blow Dulcigno to Hades, was ostentatiously despatched from England, and we have the assurance of Ministers themselves that it was meant for use and not show. But this was more than the Powers had bargained for. They were not unwilling to join in a promenade, but when pressed to play, the harmony of the concert vanished. One by one they began to make excuses, and in the end it was found that there were only two Powers willing to begin the work of destruction—England and Russia. With the object of conciliating the Powers that had stood so far her friend as to refuse to aid in the bombardment, the Porte agreed, even

by force of arms, to compel the Albanians to abandon the Ottoman rule. Incapable of defending a violation of the principles they profess specially to uphold, the apologists of the forcible cession of Dulcigno contend that the resistance of the inhabitants was fomented and fostered from Constantinople. The sequel shows that the accusation was false. After the brave but unavailing resistance offered to Dervish Pasha's troops, it would be difficult to revive the story, or at least to secure credence for it. Even Albanians won't purposely stand to be shot at.

Reflect for a moment on the part England has played in this business. The Cabinet were not charged to undertake the execution of the treaty. Conjoint action on the part of the Powers for carrying it into effect is not warranted by the instrument. When Prince Gortschakoff, in the interest of Russia, proposed concerted and obligatory action, the other Powers rejected the proposal. It was agreed that, while there should be surveillance, the fulfilment of the treaty should be left to the operation of time and the modifying influences of circumstances. To use force, then, in applying it was not only a self-imposed and gratuitous operation on the part of England, but contrary to the arrangement entered into at Berlin. With curious inconsistency, our Government are championising the cause of nationality in one part of the Ottoman dominions while they are resisting it in another. Of course, there is a difference. The Albanians are Mahomedans, and the Greeks and Bulgars are Christians; and this, I know, means much with many whose care for nationalities seems to be bounded by the Greek and Slav races. The word Christian has a fascination for some people, but the Eastern professors of that faith are not very Christ-like persons. Their Christian virtues are singularly superficial. They resemble the ingenious negro, who, when his master detected him in some offence, and asked him if he never

made use of his Bible, said, "Yes, massa, me 'trap my razor on it sometimes." The only use these Eastern Christians make of their Christian text-books is to sharpen their swords upon them.

The Greek claims stand on a different footing to those of Montenegro. Prince Nicholas had land assigned to him by the Berlin Congress; the Greeks had not. Europe however, has endorsed the justice of the Greek demands, and Turkey in principle has admitted them. The difference therefore is only over details. And if there is any vitality in the belauded Concert, it might be usefully exerted to effect the peaceable settlement of this question. As matters stand, both Greece and Turkey, but especially Greece, have great grievances against the Powers. A Conference met in spring to mark out fresh frontiers, and, from what was said, and written, and done before, and at, and subsequent to that meeting, it was not unnatural for the Greeks to expect an early and easy adjustment of the dispute. But the zeal of the Powers had since then cooled, and they now wish matters set on one side for a season. It has been assumed in this country that France was the chief champion of Greece, and scores of speeches have been made and endless articles written in praise of the Republic's chivalry and in disparagement of England's selfishness. But the French Foreign Minister denies the soft impeachment. According to his version of the business the honour we have been heaping on France was undeserved, and the reproaches we have been taking to ourselves are unmerited. M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire declared, a few weeks ago, in the French Senate, that France had never intended to help Greece further than by fair words, and that the crusading designs on behalf of the Hellenic ideal attributed to her were a delusion. Whichever tale be true as to the past, for the present certainly none of the Powers are disposed to aid Greece with either

money or men. They bid her to be patient, which is not very practical counsel under the circumstances. Calculating on more effective help Greece has strained her resources and exhausted her credit in preparation for a conflict in which, if unaided, she would be most unequally matched. The Greeks have great cause of complaint of having thus been lured by their patrons on to the ice—there, it would seem, to be left to slide certainly to immediate injury, if not to permanent damage.

If Europe has her Eastern, England has her Irish question—both equally ancient and distracting; both, too, owing their origin to the twin causes, conquest and confiscation; and both having been perpetuated by race-rivalries. From the day that Strongbow landed in Waterford to the day the present Lord Lieutenant landed at Kingstown, the history of Ireland has been a long register of repression and violence, tempered only in recent years by a glimmer of better things. While England, and Scotland, and Wales, under our flexible constitution, have been prosperous, contented, and loyal, Ireland has been distressed, discontented, and disloyal. She is the skeleton in our national cupboard. We have made Great Britain a vast store-house, into which are wafted the harvests of every clime. We have dotted the surface of the earth with colonies which in number, extent, and variety, Rome in all the plenitude of her power neither possessed nor dreamt of. We have made these colonies in their turn the centres of a genial and ever-widening civilisation. Yet we have never been able to win the hearts of one of the most generous and attachable of races, nor do more than extract from it a forced and gloomy acquiescence in our partnership. While we busy ourselves with the sufferings and struggles of oppressed nationalities at a distance, we have been singularly oblivious to the enduring aspirations after national life of a neighbouring people honoured in

the archives of history, and traceable into antiquity by its piety, its valour, and its suffering. It is the French missionary Huc, I think, that tells the tale of an Oriental emperor who, when called upon to put down a rebellion in a distant province, felt so humiliated by having to undertake so painful an enterprise that he did penance for his shortcomings as a ruler before his people. We may with advantage copy the contrition of this "heathen Chinee." We have governed Ireland for more than seven centuries with the result, if not of producing, certainly with that of not preventing periodical famines, followed first by conspiracies and then by insurrection. We judge a tree by its fruit, and the fruit of our Irish rule has been, like Dead Sea apples, fair without, but full of nauseous and bitter dust within. I say it with sorrow and shame, that the sun does not shine upon any corner of the earth in which the people are more supremely wretched than in the impoverished districts of Ireland. Much higher interests are involved in the future of Ireland than in the fate of factions. It touches our honour, curtails our influence, and damages our fair fame as a nation. While I counsel no cowardly abandonment of any of our distant responsibilities, duty and decency alike require us, for a season at least, to turn our thoughts and concentrate our efforts in our internal affairs. Before attempting to pick the mote out of our neighbour's eye, we should try to extract the one that is irritating our own. The desire for nationality is at the root of Irish discontent. There is no gainsaying the fact that a very large proportion of the population are as hostile as their fathers were to the union with England. Their designs differ. Some are in favour of separation, others of repeal, others of Home Rule; but one form or other of autonomy, or independence, they have never ceased to aspire after.

It may be unpleasant for Englishmen to be told this,

but there is no wisdom in ignoring what is palpable to everyone else, save ourselves. In the unrelieved gloom of the Irish peasant's life, he broods over his country's wrongs. The recollection of them sharpens his hostility to those whom he regards as his conquerors, and stimulates his separatist hopes. He might have become acclimatised to our authority had the conditions of his existence been less hard, but his pinching poverty strengthens his dislike and intensifies his distrust of our connexion. There are thousands of Irish families that have nothing between themselves and starvation but a paltry patch of watery potatoes. There are at least 150,000 tenants struggling to exist on holdings, the annual average produce of each of which is not more than £25. In moderate years they manage to exist upon this pauper pittance; but one bad season brings trouble, a second want, and a third starvation or insurrection. The affections of the Irish people may be won. No people are more amenable to a kind and fostering Government, which, while respecting their national idiosyncrasies, treats them with justice, concedes to them liberty, and trusts them. Englishmen recognise these requirements easily enough in foreign countries and with other peoples, but by some strange incapacity they cannot see the force of them on the other side of the Irish Sea. The virtues they honour abroad they disregard and often despise at home. The Irishman's troubles are not listened to and his miseries have not unfrequently been mocked. The unsympathetic snarl with which the English press usually receives Irish proposals for a reform, tends much to embitter the relations between the two peoples. Our illustrated papers seldom portray an Irish peasant in any other character except that of a scoundrel, a skulk, or a coward. Yet amongst the people thus so shamefully lampooned, there is less crime—as crime is commonly counted—than amongst any other people in Christendom. There is no

seemed imminent. Sir Robert Peel suddenly saw the necessity of sending what he called "a message of peace" to Ireland. He brought forward bills providing for the establishment of institutions, in which the youth of Ireland could receive a higher education than was otherwise available to them; for granting a subsidy to the Catholic College at Maynooth; and for altering the mode of transferring and regulating the terms of holding land. When Sir Robert Peel and Sir James Graham respectively introduced these bills they stated that these remedial measures were proposed because the Cabinet dared not deal boldly with France or America if peace was not assured in Ireland. The Ministers declared that to go to war with either, or with both States, while an insurrection was smouldering so near at home would be dangerous, as American or French soldiers might be landed in Ireland, and the repealers might welcome them as friends. A measure for emancipating the Catholics from the operation of the inhuman penal laws was held out as a bribe to induce Irishmen to give up their Parliament; but the promised relief was not conceded for nearly thirty years, and when granted, the Duke of Wellington made no attempt to disguise the fact that it was given, not out of regard for the righteous claims of the Catholics, but because he and his colleagues believed that the alternative before them was either emancipation or civil war. By the confession of the originating statesmen themselves it was dread of civil war that won emancipation in 1829; and fear of war with America and France that got the educational and ecclesiastical concessions in 1845. It was the Fenian rising that forced forward the Church Act in 1869; and it is beyond dispute that any radical amendment of the land laws that may be made next session will be the result of the present agitation in Ireland.

No Government can ignore the significance and the force of that social uprising. The only way in which, in

the opinion of many, it ought to be met, is by the old, the odious, and ignoble device of coercion. The unceasing cry of these persons is " restore order," " protect property," and " imprison the agitators." The sword is with them the only sceptre. But it would be difficult to imprison an entire people. Doubtless the first duty of a Government is to insist upon the maintenance of law. If that is not done, chaos will come again. Where law terminates, tyranny begins. But suppose law is enforced by a " whiff of grape-shot," or by the click of a 40-pounder—suppose you do create desolation, and call it order, what then? Is its authority to be sustained only by the halter of the hangman, or the carbine of the constable? That is not the way law is maintained in England. With us it is broad-based on the spontaneous and inviolate good faith of a free people. And until the law is sustained in a like way in Ireland, all the machinery at the command of the executive will fail to uphold it. You can only kill an agitation by removing its cause. As long as the germs of a disease are in the system the patient is uncured. I have no desire to apologise for, or extenuate the excesses in the Irish agitation, but there has been gross exaggeration concerning it. It is difficult to collect, even upon the spot and in quiet times, exact reports of what is transpiring. In times of excitement and in distant districts, the difficulty is greatly increased. I am far from saying that the stories sent to the English papers are intentionally untrue, but I do say that little pains is taken to verify their truth before they are sent. Rumours gather as they roll. They are then caught up and published as facts; and a lie once put into circulation cannot be caught until it has made the circuit of the daily press. People see the first report, and never see the correction, even if one is ever published. A fictitious public opinion is thus created from which unoffending people suffer. Even Government returns are not always

ened life. I do not recall these painful periods of our social history with the object of excusing breaches of the law in Ireland. Two blacks do not make a white. But when the proceedings across the Channel are denounced with such vindictive rhetoric it is well to remember that poverty and wretchedness generated, amongst Englishmen, greater and more reprehensible excesses, than causes, more prolonged and more intense, are now generating in Ireland. We tried repression, and it failed. We then tried concession, political, and industrial. We have the result in as free and as contented and as prosperous an artisan population as any country can boast of. Untaught by experience, our white terrorists revive the demand for coercion—that never-failing nostrum of all timid politicians, from the days of Draco to the present time. It is eighty years since the union was effected that was to secure for Ireland liberty, peace and prosperity. During that period of time there have been forty-seven Acts passed limiting, and ten Acts passed entirely suspending, the most precious right of the Constitution—the right of personal freedom. Ireland certainly has not benefited by these poisonous provisions for public safety. According to the advocates of coercion, it is to-day more seriously disturbed than it has ever been since '98, and yet they would apply their quack specific once more. In the dark days of England the reformers advocated the necessity of going to the root of the political cancer, cutting it out bodily, and then binding up the wound by generous measures. From this they got their name of Radicals. As a believer in their faith and a follower of their policy, I repeat the old demand—reform, and not repression, concession, and not coercion, for Irish, as it was demanded for English grievances.

If the union between England and Ireland is to be anything more than a mere legal form, the Irish people

must be trusted. We systematically exclude Liberal Irishmen from offices of high political responsibility. In the present Cabinet there is not an Irishman. In the present Administration there is not one except the law officers and two or three courtiers, and they are really rather Englishmen who live in Ireland than Irishmen. England, Scotland, and Wales are all represented on the Treasury Bench, but Ireland has not a solitary spokesman there. Even the ornamental office of Lord Lieutenant is filled by an English peer, and the officials of the Castle are now, as they ever were, drawn from the English garrison, the traditional and inveterate haters of everything Irish. Distrust begets distrust. Mutual repression should be replaced by harmonious combination. In other countries, and in our own self-governed colonies, Irish legislators are not tabooed. A few years ago, by a singular coincidence, three of the leading Powers in Europe had in offices of the highest responsibility, descendants of old Irish exiles. At the same time three of our colonies had in posts of equal authority three other Irishmen whom we had banished as rebels in 1848. If Irishmen can rule with success in Australia and Canada, if we can entrust them with the direction of hazardous campaigns in Afghanistan and South Africa, surely we may trust them to assist in administering their own affairs at home. Until we do this all our efforts to pacify Ireland will fail—fail egregiously, and I may add deservedly.

It is impossible at this hour, and on the eve of the production of a Government measure it is unnecessary, to discuss the merits of the multifarious projects for dealing with the Irish land. Amidst numerous councillors it is to be hoped there will be found wisdom. Those who have thought over the subject longest and examined it most minutely, are the least disposed to dogmatise upon it. To every scheme that is, or ever was, or ever may be sug-

of the Ulster customs should be attempted. If tenant-right secures peace in Down, and if the absence of tenant-right produces disturbance in Kerry, it is not unreasonable perhaps to try the specific in the south that cures the troubles in the north. While thus putting the case for tenant-right, I again record my conviction that the establishment of a system of peasant proprietary would be fairer to the landlord and better to the tenant than this scheme of complicated copy-holding. If the Government honestly and fairly buys a landlord's estate, no injustice is done; but to forcibly compel the Irish landlords to accept as co-partners with them in their properties, some 250,000 or 300,000 tenants, is a scheme scarcely likely to work satisfactorily. Whatever plan, however, the Government proposes should not only be carefully but generously considered. So far as I am concerned, while I will not hesitate to criticise it freely and frankly, I will give the Ministry the most ungrudging support in their resolve to deal with this, as knotty a question of social and political economy as ever perplexed a Parliament. If our interests require that we should rule Ireland, our honour requires that we should rule it with acceptance. The times and the circumstances are calculated to excite doubts, to arouse passions, and to awaken fears. It behoves all anxious for the prosperity of the country to rise superior to the crooked tactics of party, and help every honest effort made to uproot the social canker which is eating into the soul of a sensitive and suffering people. If the Ministry have the heart to conceive, the understanding to direct, and the strength to execute a settlement of this harassing problem, their names will "On Fame's eternal bead-roll be worthy to be fyled."

VII.—THE COERCION OF PARLIAMENT, IRELAND AND EGYPT.

TOWN HALL, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, JANUARY 8TH, 1883.

Last session started amidst hopeful assurances and with many fair resolves. Its fitful course is strewn with broken promises and baffled projects. The events of even a sterile session are so multifarious, they crowd upon each other in such rapid succession, that they confuse the public mind. This has been pre-eminently the case in the session of 1882. The recollection of its earlier proceedings has been effaced by the latter. The longdrawn out debate on the Address in answer to the Queen's Speech; the production of a fresh Parliamentary code; its postponement to permit of the proposing of a vote of censure on the House of Lords for presuming to inquire into the working of the Land Act; the resumption of the procedure debate; and its second adjournment in consequence of the menacing attitude of Irish affairs; the abandonment of the Coercion Act; the release of suspects; the retirement of the Viceroy and his secretary, and the proclamation of a conciliatory policy for Ireland; the extinction of the popular expectations thereby excited by the ghastly tragedy that took place in Phœnix Park; the dejection caused by that cruel crime; the recurrence to the stale and dreary round of repression and reform represented by the Crimes and the Arrears Bills; the passage of the former after the suspension of the Irish members and of the latter after a futile opposition from a section of the Peers; the wavering and evasive Egyptian diplomacy of the Cabinet, culminating in the bombardment

of Alexandria and the subsequent invasion, conquest, and occupation of the country; the supplementary session, the final adoption of the Cloture, of a number of minor rules, and of a scheme of Grand Committees, constitute together as chequered a sessional retrospect as modern experience supplies. There have been mistakes many, and miscalculations not a few. There have been dangerous inroads made into constitutional practices, and flagrant violations of Liberal principles committed. But the results, although legislatively discouraging, represent a large measure of physical exertion and mental worry. They bring into prominence the Parliamentary intrepidity, resource and endurance of the Leader of the House, which, whether men agree with or dissent from his purpose, all must acknowledge and admire. Little of the work promised has been done, although other work, equally arduous, has been accomplished. The House will resume in February, 1883, the task set before it in February, 1882. The Liberal programme is the same this as it was last year, as it was at the last election, and indeed as it was at the election before last. I can add nothing serviceable to the summary of it given, or the comment on it offered, when I spoke here eleven months ago. There is little difference as to the principles, and less as to the necessity for measures dealing with bankruptcy, electoral corruption, local taxation, and patents. Disputes will arise over the details, and the details cannot be discussed until the measures are produced.

One material advantage the Government now enjoys. They have at their command facilities for forcing forward their business such as no previous Administration ever possessed. Nothing save their own want of tact and judgment can impede their progress. They have power to divide their work, to silence the Opposition, to muzzle all malcontents. They have behind them a majority practically undiminished in numbers and unbroken in enthusiasm. Their

stock of popularity in the constituencies is unexhausted, while their opponents are disorganised and dispirited. Not a passing ripple ruffles the smooth surface of the political lake, and the outlook all round is roseate and reassuring. The jarring notes that reach us from Ireland are but reminders that all Governments are human and liable to the infirmities of human kind. This is the Ministerial version of the situation. I do not endorse it in its entirety; but taking the picture as they paint it, their programme, position, and prospects justify us in looking for a busy and productive session this year. The Ministers have a great opportunity. No Ministry ever had a greater. They have the measures, the machinery, and the men. How will they use them? Time will show. We will leave the thirty odd questions of primary and urgent interest that three sessions ago they took office to carry—about them there is little difference of opinion amongst us—and turn to more debatable topics. The distinguishing characteristic of the Cabinet has been its passion for coercion. They have applied it everywhere. Let us attempt to estimate the effects of this policy of force on Parliament, on Ireland, and on Egypt.

The advocates of the cloture have changed their ground. We were assured by all variety of argument and expression that it was the sole specific for saving the House of Commons from present degeneracy and ultimate decay. When an inventor gets a new patent it is, with him, for the moment everything. Nothing before was ever so good. But as the novelty wears off his enthusiasm declines. So it has been with the patentees of the Parliamentary penal law. It was everything that was wanted till it was got. When got, its merits are minimised. The Prime Minister himself says that any man who looks to the gag as a cure for garrulity is not only in error, but in an "inexcusable and stupid error." These are his own

words. They are rather hard on the party claquers, who for months past have been crying up the Ministerial apparatus as a certain remedy for legislative barrenness. We are now told it is to be often looked at but seldom used, that it is only a Parliamentary tawse to frighten obstreperous members. If this be the case, what has the fight been for? It has been a culpable waste of time and temper. If the cloture be applied in all its stringency, the injurious consequences predicted from its application are as certain to rise as anything contingent can be certain. It is impossible to calculate the cumulative effect of all the rules. Trial only will tell that. But no meaning is to be attached to party threats, and English political warfare has undergone a marvellous change, if the cloture is not used to stop a debate when that debate becomes damaging and disagreeable to the majority.

The Government concentrate their care on the legislative functions of the House of Commons. With them the machinery is everything—the spirit nothing. They value the chains and pulleys of the Parliamentary gearing more than the impelling force that sets them in motion. They seem to think that they can shuffle the political forces as they can shuffle a pack of cards. They want to revolve men as regularly as they do cog-wheels. Bald formulas are substituted for vivifying principles. I do not undervalue the utility of State mechanism nor deny that the complicated appliances and arrangements of civilised life have developed the necessity for elaborate law-making. But you can drive a good doctrine too far. If the State has its rights so has the individual. I hold that the other functions that Parliament fulfils are almost, if not equally, as important as the Legislative. It is the supreme tribunal of the nation, to which all grievances gravitate. It is a political court of appeal with unlimited jurisdiction, before which the highest and the humblest can be arraigned.

Ignorance and insignificance, poverty and despair, debarred a hearing elsewhere, can secure one there. It is the people's consciousness that in the last resort their case can be stated freely, fearlessly, and without fee in Parliament, that has given it its enduring vitality and perennial power. The Paper Parliaments of other countries have fallen, because their foundations were not laid in popular confidence. Ours has survived the vicissitudes of centuries, and gathered strength as it gathered years. It is the centre of the nation's free life. Its decisions have not only given force to national sentiment, but its debates have had an important influence in forming that sentiment. This influence will be impaired by the restraints on discussion that have been adopted. If you shut out light from the eye, you lessen the capacity for seeing. If you cease to exercise a limb, it withers and weakens. If you stifle debate, you do a double damage—you diminish the faculty for engaging in it, and you create a demand for further limitations. The principle—if it can be said there is a principle—that underlies the cloture is sophistical and unfair. It fetters the whole for fear of the few. It supplants the genial courtesies which have been the growth of generations by cold and rigid regulations. It is said those courtesies have been curtailed. Admit it. Is that a reason for their abrogation? Every good in life has its alloy of evil. The alloy of liberty is licence. The alloy of discussion is loquacity. Excessive talk may have postponed good, but it has also stopped injurious legislation. Who will contend that the benefit conferred by Parliamentary liberty does not far outbalance any injury inflicted by Parliamentary licence? What has not been won by free speech? What may not be lost by gagging? The business of the House of Commons, some complain, is often badly done. Legislation is botched and tinkered. As much time is expended in passing explanatory and amending Acts as in passing the originals. Allow

in their judgment, so much private members' nonsense. Formerly, active Liberals took the rights of unofficial members under their especial care. The proudest achievements of their party are identified with independent action. There has never been a time in political memory, when a Liberal Ministry has been in office, that there has not been a group of free-lances below the gangway, spurring them forward, commenting on their defects and censuring their errors. The present Home Secretary was the unceasing critic of Mr. Gladstone's last Government. The late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster was a "candid friend" of the Governments of Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell. There were many more censors besides them. Some revelled in their adventurous isolation, others aimed at the lofty function of Parliamentary arbitrament between the contending factions. But much has happened since then. The "candid friends" and the independent arbiters of past days are ministers and ex-ministers now. Like all neophytes, they display an excess of zeal in their new vocation. No censure is too severe, and no imputation too mean to apply to the men who are trying to do now what they did till office seduced and silenced them. The despised private members have been the pioneers of progress. There is no reform that Liberals glory in, and the nation has benefited by, that their unrequited and oft unrecognised exertions have not forced from the theoretical to the practical stage.

There is a broad difference between the reformer and the statesman. The reformer labours for the future. His ruling passion is duty. He is not perplexed with the corroding calculations of interest or popularity. The statesman is necessarily a trimmer and a temporiser. He labours for the present, and secures the ...s and huzzas of the hour. I make no complaint of ... who started their careers as "root-and-branch"

Radicals and closed them as courtiers and placemen. Every man to his taste and his faculty. But it is the reformer that has made progressive Ministries possible. His task is the nobler one, although it is neither the pleasantest nor the most profitable. It was to the advocacy of Mr. Whitbread that we owe the earliest efforts for national education. It was to Mr. Wilberforce that we are indebted for the abolition of slavery, to Mr. Hume for financial reform, Mr. Grote and Mr. Berkeley for the ballot, Mr. Cobden for Free Trade. These were all non-official men; all independent members—men who sought the success of their cause rather than the convenience of their party. The list might be swelled with the names of some of the foremost Englishmen of the century. Mr. Bright himself, when an independent member, thus spoke of the class: "There is nothing more essential for the progress of the freedom of this country than that you should have an independent party in the House of Commons. If there had been no men in Parliament but those who trembled for the fate of a Ministry, where would have been the liberties that you have already achieved?" Where, indeed? Let Mr. Cobden answer. "I am convinced," said he, "if anything is to be done for the great mass of the people, if you are to secure any reform of magnitude, it is to be done by the people resolving to secure it, and totally disregarding the convenience or the existence of political parties in the House of Commons."

Leading Liberals are acting as if they had found the truth, and that all further inquiry was unnecessary. Every man must humbly toe the party line, or be punished for his temerity. The Governmer
new rules are rendering the existe
vanced men impossible. The clo
in Parliament and the caucuse
There are, I know, many Libera

situation, and regret it. They chafe under the restraints, and cherish the hope that it will be but temporary. Some expect to get from the Government an amendment of the liquor, and others of the land laws. Some look to it for further steps towards disestablishment (in which they will be disappointed), others think it will equalise the suffrage and concede county government. They do not approve of all that is done, but they submit to it for the prospect of securing early legislation on one or other of their favourite projects. When the whirligig of time brings the Conservatives once more to the Treasury Bench, Liberals will recover their liberty of speech and action. They will then revive their protest against the invasion of the rights of private members, and resist all encroachments strenuously enough. To get what they think will be an ultimate good, they will now do a little wrong. I do not believe in this immoral and emasculating Parliamentary opportunism. The men who follow it will find, when it is too late, that the privileges they have been content, for party convenience, to allow to fall into abeyance will have been abrogated. They may call for their revival, but they will call in vain.

There are few forms of recrimination less profitable than the "I told you so" argument. But as my opposition to coercion did not meet with general approval, I may be permitted to recall the reasons for my resisting it, and compare them with the results. I opposed the first Coercion Bill because it was odious in theory, and would be impotent in practice, and the second because it would convert open agitation into conspiracy. Have not both these forecasts been fulfilled? Before the Act of 1881 had been half a year in operation it was felt to be a failure, and its authors abandoned it. They released the prisoners, made a bargain with the men they had erewhile denounced as rebels and incendiaries, and amended the Land Act at their sugges-

tion. The Act of this year has driven discontent beneath the surface, and led to a dangerous development of secret societies. I do not presume to be an authority, but I know it is the opinion of men who are, that the Irish people are socially and politically more disturbed, and in some parts of the country more distressed, than they ever have been in recent years. The sense of wrong done by coercion wrankles in the popular mind. It has not been, and will not soon be, either forgotten or forgiven. Every man imprisoned without trial cherishes an undying grudge against his gaolers. The Land Act has not been largely successful. Ministers took an inaccurate gauge of the work that the measure was to perform. They calculated that in two or three years, with a specified staff, all the tenants whose cases would come under its operation would be reached. Now what are the facts? The Act has been in operation eighteen months. The strength of the staff has been trebled and its cost quadrupled. The number of fair rents that have been fixed by the Court is 18,600, and the number of agreements to fix rents out of court is about 19,000—in all, 37,000 or 38,000, less the decisions appealed against. And this out of a total of 600,000 tenants. The gross amount of reduction of rent got is about £70,000. But that has only been obtained at a cost to the tenants, landlords, and Government combined of £400,000 for legal and other charges. To put the result in a sentence—for the expenditure of £400,000 in eighteen months, 37,000 odd tenants have got a reduction in their annual rents of £70,000—rather a slow and a somewhat costly process.

The action of the Arrears Act has been even wider of the Ministerial calculations. It was estimated that 300,000 occupiers would benefit by it, and that the sum required to meet their demands would be from two to three million pounds. But the applicants are only a third of that num-

ber, and the money required to satisfy them will be short of three-quarters of a million, instead of three millions. The tenants whom the land legislation has satisfied are the comparatively well-to-do class. The starving cottiers on the West Coast, whose misery it is impossible to exaggerate, and the smaller holders elsewhere have not been reached by it. The Act excited hopes that are unrealised and fears that are unappeased. The landlords are sulky and the tenants unsatisfied. The weather, too, this year has spoiled both food and firing. In some districts the harvest has been lost, and the turf not collected. There will be serious want from Kerry to Donegal before the next crops are gathered amounting to little short of famine.

The English people have not realised the new power that has arisen in Irish politics. There have been agrarian, ecclesiastical, and national agitations often before, but there has been none so broadly democratic as this last one. Amidst all their strife the Irish people have hitherto shown a certain submission to their social superiors. The Episcopal clergy were not favourites, but they were deferred to. Disestablishment has shorn them of their shadowy influence. That outpost of their Pale has been driven in. The landlord's power has lost its lustre. If not broken, it has been bent. Its glamour is gone. The farmers will never again doff their hats to local Gesslers. They are seized with the conviction that one day they will become landlords themselves. They have secured a partnership in the soil, and they think they will shortly secure an ownership. That is the all-pervading belief. The men who hug the delusion that the Irish peasant is still the deferential dependent so picturesquely depicted in novels or portrayed in plays; those who think that the Hall and the Manor House still inspire their traditional terrors or command their customary obeisance, will have a rude awakening some day. The change is the consequence of political

teaching and of contact with America. The hand-to-mouth politicians, whose conceptions never reach beyond the machinations of parties and the votes of Parliament, ridiculed the Young Irelanders when they sought to create a national literature, and make it racy of the soil. But these disparaged poets, orators, and historians were right, and their self-satisfied critics wrong. The late agitation is largely the tuition of the teaching of the men of '48. Irish history may be a sealed book in the Government schools, but it is read and re-read by many a cabin fire. Its recital alternately stirs bright and bitter memories. It is crossed by many a bar of gloom, but it is illumined by many examples of heroism and devotion. Emigration has lessened the population, but it has leavened it with principles intensely antagonistic to those of the men who bartered their independence for paltry bribes and more paltry decorations, and whose descendants have abandoned a career of noble, national effort for one of ignoble ease. The clearances have crowded the towns with paupers. While sweeping away the shopkeeper's customers, they have added largely to their rates. As their outgoings have increased their capacity to meet them has decreased. While emigration has democratised the peasants, evictions have agrarianised the artisans. The landlords thought, when they drove their tenants from their estates, that their troubles had ended. But they were mistaken. The people have found the force of Jeremy Bentham's conclusion, who, after a survey of five hundred years of European history, declared "that only by making the ruling few uneasy could the oppressed many obtain a particle of relief."

Matters will not mend till we abandon the statesmanship of makeshifts, palliatives, expedients, and coercion. The social difficulty will never be settled till the occupiers are made owners; and the political difficulty will

ment. Ex-suspects are made sheriffs, and mayors, and aldermen, and councillors, and members of Parliament. A constable, supposed to be a political spy, is shot in the streets of Dublin. The man that killed him is cheered on his way from the hospital to the gaol, and his supposed accomplices are serenaded by bands playing Irish national airs. Is it possible for thoughtful and observant Englishmen not to see the significance of all this? Did we not see it all clearly enough when like things took place in Lombardy under Austrian rule? This is certainly not a party question. It is pre-eminently a national one. It touches us all closely. Our fair name as well as our interest is involved in its settlement. Not in the spirit of recrimination but with patriotic earnestness I appeal to every man here to help to free England from the humiliation of having an integral part of the kingdom constantly revolving in a dismal cycle of distress, disturbance, and despotism.

The dazzle of our military parade has obscured the origin of the war in Egypt. The line of policy that led up to it has been lost in the smoke of Tel-el-Kebir. We cannot go back. What is done is done, and cannot be mended. But we may predict the future from the past. Why did we go to Egypt? Why? To defend British interests. English interests are two-fold—national and personal. She is interested in it as a highway to India. She is interested in it because a number of her people have invested largely in Egyptian finance, and not a few in Egyptian trade. Heretofore we have striven to keep Egypt, as we have striven to keep Constantinople, out of the control of an aggressive Power. We wanted to trade with the Egyptians, to have a road through their country, but we did not want to possess it. The settlement which secured the Sultan as sovereign and his Vice-[illegible] ruler, served us, satisfied the Egyptians, and did [illegible]b Europe. It worked fairly well for twenty

years. But a profligate Khedive got into debt, and, in an evil hour, he began to borrow. And borrowing brought disaster. In 1862, the first debt of ten millions was contracted. This indebtedness was increased, one way and another, to nearly a hundred millions by 1873. Only about 45 millions, however, were actually received. The rest was expended in interest and expenses. The contractors made large profits, amounting in some instances to 26 per cent., and never less than 12 per cent., on the loan transactions. Of these 45 millions, not much more than 16 millions went to the improvement of the country. The other was wasted, or, what was as bad as wasted, it went to pay the debts of insensate and extravagant rulers. Before this financing began, the annual taxation of the country amounted to £4,900,000. Now it exceeds £10,000,000. It has more than doubled in less than twenty years.

The Egyptian fellah is one of the poorest, and most patient, ill-treated, and inoffensive cultivators of the soil in the world. He has been the victim for ages of oppression. But never since the time of the Pharaohs has he been more systematically and unmercifully crushed as by the international usurers and their agents. He is taxed £2 per head, double as much as the Czar taxes the Russian, and ten times as much as we tax our Indian peasants. Fully half of the revenue is carried out of the country to pay bondholders' interest. There is proportionately a larger tax drain from the Egyptians than from any other known people. There are but five millions of them, and they have to stagger on under a debt almost equal to that of India, which is borne by 240 millions of people. But that is not all. The Egyptians have not only to pay, but to pay for the privilege of paying. The taxes are wrung from them by battalions of European bailiffs. The number of foreign tax-collectors in Egypt

property, purse, or person. The prisoners were treated not merely with consideration, but with kindness. The law was maintained, the land was cultivated, and preparations were made against a high Nile. If Arabi had been seeking his own aggrandisement at his country's cost, he had abundant means of enriching himself. Yet he has gone into exile a poor man, bankrupt in everything but honour. The extinction of military despotism! Oh, the exquisite irony of that phrase! The men who have overridden the Constitution, and made Ireland a vast barracks, rushing three thousand miles off in their zeal to put down military despotism! Can the force of sarcasm or self-deception further go? Arabi did not make the rebellion, the rebellion made him, and the combined folly and greed of successive Khedives and the Controllers caused the rebellion. If ever there was a genuine national uprising it was that of these unrevolutionary and unwarlike Egyptians. The Notables and the Ulemas, the people and the army, all joined in it. There was scarcely a man, however poor, but contributed his mite to it. Some placed at the disposition of the Government of the National Defence half their property, others the whole. In thirty days 100,000 volunteers, with 8,000 horses, 4,000 mules, and stores for nearly double that force were raised. There is no precedent in the history of Islam of such patriotic devotion. There is no case in Christendom to be compared with it since the Poles gathered for their last, but not, I trust, their final fight with their oppressors. The Egyptians failed, failed easily, because their military skill was not equal to their devotion. But the resignation with which their failure was accepted gives the lie to the accusations of cupidity and cruelty levelled at their leaders. We went to war, not for the safety of the Canal, which was never threatened, not for the maintenance of order, which we were the first to disturb, but for the unromantic and

materialistic purpose of safeguarding British interests by securing greater control over the Government of Egypt.

So much for the past. Now for the future. We are the uncontested masters of the country. What will we do with it? Keep it! Yes, we will keep it. We have been successful and fortunate—successful in the war, fortunate in the state of Europe. Turkey is nervous and uneasy, but cannot interfere. France threatens, but she will do, can do, nothing else. Russia is angry but powerless. Italy growls, but she won't strike. Germany, which means Austria, also acquiesces if she does not approve. England and France at variance makes her game. Neither France, nor Russia, nor Italy, nor Turkey can move—and Germany won't. We are masters of the situation. How will we act? How should we act? There are three courses open to us. We can call a Congress, and abide its decision. That is possible, but not probable. A Congress has no defined field of deliberation. It can range at will over the whole domain of European politics, and might revive inconvenient controversies. Our old friend the "concert" has been wounded—fatally, I fear—in the house of a friend. He served his time. Let him rest in peace. The second plan is to restore the *status quo ante* Arabi, but that we are not likely to attempt. It was well enough to extol the Control before the war. It was a catching cry for the time. But the Dual Control is gone beyond recall. If Arabi has been exiled, so also has French influence. Having once got clear of France, we will keep clear. Political partnerships are often inconvenient, and sometimes unpleasant—especially when the purposes of the partners do not run on all fours. The third plan is annexation, and that, after some dallying, we will, I believe, adopt. Men are dominated by words. "Conquest" is a harsh word. We will disguise our doings under a more euphemistic appellation. "Occupation" is better. "Protection" is

French or Italians at Tripoli. It means the break-up of the Turkish empire. Egypt may, probably will, prosper under our rule. The laborious, resigned, and docile fellah will not have his taxes beaten out of him by the bastinado twice over. The grosser abuses in the administration of the law will be remedied. But the idea of an Arab nationality—the dream of the race for centuries—will be dissipated.

But leaving the tangled skein of the Egyptian politics and the speculations that it suggests, let us ask, where are the election professions of the Government in all this? Did they change their doctrines when they changed their seats? An unmentionable place is said to be paved with good intentions. Is office paved with "broken pledges and principles in pieces?" They were bound to a policy of peace, and yet they have taken to war with a fervour seldom equalled and never surpassed. They were the special champions of Nationalities, and yet they have beaten down by bombs and bayonets one of the most interesting and hopeful efforts after national life that modern times have seen. They promised never to build up British interests on the "bones of people fighting for their fatherland," yet they have founded their authority in Egypt on the corpses of Egyptian patriots. They declaimed loudly and bitterly against the injustice and meanness of charging the cost of a war on the Indian border on the Indian exchequer, but they are putting the cost of a war far from the Indian frontier on the "mild Hindoo." The men who denounced so fiercely the blood-guiltiness of aggression and the dangers of annexation, have achieved the greatest conquest of the century, and entailed on the nation responsibilities of greater weight and extent than was ever dreamed of by their predecessors. The somersault has been cleverly executed. If the consequences were not so serious, it would be amusing. With what delightful disregard of consistency the crowds who cheered lustily for one line of policy a couple of years ago, are

cheering now for the very opposite. To complete the contradictions, the Cabinet, who commenced the war without the consent of Parliament, gave only the most meagre reports, and no explanation of it, during its progress, are now committing the country to engagements the full consequence of which no one can foretell, free from both Parliamentary comment or control. All Parliament will have to do with the settlement will be to reject it or ratify it. And it will ratify it by a party vote, in which members will vote as they are told—not as they think. Not for their principles, but for their party. It is a "strange world, my masters," and there is nothing stranger in it than the gyrations of party politicians.

The three boldly-marked questions in the year just closed are those symbolised by the words "Parliament," "Ireland," and "Egypt." I have dealt with those chiefly, as on these alone I have differed from the Government. It would have been more agreeable to have selected points of agreement for discussion, to have chanted the praises of Ministers in chorus, and to have rushed into rhapsodies over their measures. But although pleasanter, this course would not have been so candid. It is manlier when you differ from the current of opinion to state your dissent openly, and accept the consequences of popular disapproval. A representative should be something more than a machine. He should not only vote, but he should make known why he so votes. By expounding his doctrines and diffusing information, thought is stimulated and opinion formed. Members who frankly criticise public affairs, show their own sense of responsibility and exalt the character of the tribunal before which they plead. As long as my fellow-townsmen care to send me to the House of Commons I shall use these annual gatherings to expound and enforce definite political principles, and comment on events not from the narrow platform of a partisan, but from the broad ground of a citizen.

VIII.—EGYPT—HOME RULE—REFORM.

THE CIRCUS, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, DECEMBER 22ND, 1883.

Did you ever try to pump water from an all but empty well? As you work the handle, plashes of puddle and gusts of wind, mingled with soughs and screeches, like sounds from a soul in pain, are emitted from the pipe. It is not a profitable exercise, but not more unprofitable than that put before a member of Parliament who has to pump up a speech from the dull details of an irksome session. Every spring of ideas has been drained; every current of criticism exhausted. There is nothing left but political bilge water. It is easy to bespatter one party with mud, and blow the praises of the other in fulsome phrases. But that is not edifying either to auditor or speaker. Party controversy is but a parody on serious political argument. The controversialists do not try to trace the reason of things. They only try to trip each other up. But what can any member say of last session that has not been said a hundred times or more? It was humdrum, not heroic. We sat long and sat late. We talked often and talked fast. Some of the talk was sensible, some of it silly, all of it stale. It is doubtful if any of the Acts passed will permanently affect the life of the people and it is certain that mankind would not be the poorer by one fresh thought or one graceful form of utterance if a fire was made of the miles of oratory.

The Government are to be commended for making provision for the further reduction of the National Debt, for attempting to substitute an affirmation for an oath for those who object to the present form of swearing allegiance, and for trying to negotiate a convention with the Suez Canal Company. Their Bankruptcy Act is well meant, but it will only succeed, if it succeed at all, till designing chicaneers discover a method of breaking through its meshes. There is only one way to reform the bankruptcy laws, and that is to abolish them. If a merchant or a tradesman is weak enough or careless enough to trust an untrustworthy creditor, let him take the consequences of his ignorance or his supineness. When a man violates the laws of nature he suffers in his health. When he violates the laws of trade let him suffer in his till. When he has suffered sufficiently he will be more careful. If a purchaser secure credit surreptitiously or by fraud, send him to gaol as you would do any other rogue. By clearing the country of the huge hierarchy of bankruptcy barristers, bailiffs, receivers, lawyers, controllers, assessors, and accountants, who live out of the traders as the traders live out of the public, the gain to every individual citizen would be substantial, and the influence on the nation beneficent. The saving effected by the extinction of this colossal officialism would compensate for the shadowy dividends now got, while commerce would be purified and profits increased. When will English men of business see the folly of having a new bankruptcy law every decade, oscillating between the extremes of official laxity and supervision, and have the courage and sense to apply a drastic cure to a drastic evil?

There are many things doubtful about the Corrupt Practices Act, but this is plain—it will serve, perhaps was meant to serve, the regulation candidates with organised parties behind them, and will place at a disadvantage,

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further or be abandoned. Members will not be got to do double duty. The whole House might be split into committees, and for a time it might give itself over almost exclusively to committee work. Why cannot Parliament meet, like the Law Courts, in November? Ministers could then introduce their Bills, and have them read a second time or rejected before Christmas. From January to Easter the committees might pursue their labours. By Easter the Bills might be reported, and by Whitsuntide passed. Our Teutonic ancestors, in their national councils, debated every subject twice—once sober and once drunk, so that both sides might be seen. We have bettered that performance, as we often discuss the same questions in the same Parliament, not twice but ten times, while other subjects cannot get squeezed into a solitary hearing. By a comprehensive scheme of devolution, by allowing Bills to be taken up one year where they were left the last, and by forbidding any question to be raised twice in the same Parliament, the congestion complained of may be mitigated. It is too much to hope it will be removed.

The Delphic utterances of Ministers during the session respecting Egypt had the merit of satisfying both annexionists and anti-annexionists. We have since been told that our troops are to be, and would have been, withdrawn if it had not been for that mysterious apparition—the False Prophet. Perhaps, and perhaps not. But whether withdrawn, or reduced, or retained, of this we may remain assured—the Government will not relinquish their control of Egyptian affairs. We deceive ourselves with words. We take phrases for facts and illusions for realities. A well-known French satire describes how a certain Monsieur Jourdain conceived himself injured when his father was called a shopkeeper. His father a shopkeeper! Never! It was a slander. "He was," explained the indignant

son, " an active and obliging man, and a good judge of cloth, parcels of which he bought and distributed amongst his friends in exchange—for cash. No one would call such a man a shopkeeper. He was a gentleman." It is a matter of taste. But on Tyneside we would call him a menage man. There is just as much difference between a peripatetic tradesman like Monsieur Jourdain's father and a menage man, as between our holding Egypt by a British force or holding it by a force of mercenaries raised, drilled, and controlled by British officers. It is a difference without a distinction. We have 200,000 soldiers in India, but little more than one-fourth of them are Europeans. Our control over Egypt is as complete as it is over India. Englishmen direct its policy, control its finances, command its army, superintend its gendarmerie, and manipulate its taxes. The Khedive and his pashas do, in a languid and lackadaisical manner, their allotted work, and draw their salaries. But let either the one or the other turn rusty, and it will very soon be made manifest who are masters. We may wreath our sword in roses, but it is all the same a sword—keen and pliant as a Damascus blade. Mr. Cobbett once offered to be roasted on a gridiron if certain financial results promised by Mr. Spring Rice ever transpired. If the doughty pamphleteer had been alive now he might with greater confidence have engaged to be grilled on his historic gridiron when English influence ceases to dominate in Egypt. We are there, as we are in the Punjaub, in Assam, and other Indian States, none of which we formally annexed, but all of which we have occupied and kept for the same reason that we have occupied and will keep Egypt, because our interests require it and our means permit it. We have really no discretion in the matter. Egypt cannot now stand alone. When people crouch, like camels to be loaded, those nearest at hand mount them and apply the whip of the

tyrant. Our abandonment of Egypt would be as cruel as our original occupation was uncalled for. There was a chance of the Egyptians working their way to self-made independence. The process would have been long and slow and tortuous, but the end might have been achieved. We stopped it. We overturned their Parliament and are now trying to construct a pinchbeck one ourselves. Our plan is to be Arabi's with Arabi left out. It is foredoomed to failure. The talk of an Eastern Belgium is babble. Eastern Belgium, forsooth! rather call it an Eastern Babel. Belgium is the product of centuries of freedom—Egypt of centuries of enslavement. In one country we have a staid and sturdy population with the memorials of many a stout national struggle stamped on its character. In the other, the débris of a thousand years of slavery and oppression.

If there is one fact better attested by history than another, it is the impossibility of mingling on equal terms the nomadic, dreamy, fatalistic Asiatic, and the pushing, practical, and progressive Englishman. They both have merits, but you can no more mix them than you can mix sulphuric acid and sweet milk. The Eastern may form a Government of his own with many admirable features in it, but it will shrivel up when you plant it alongside one raised on the Western model. Experimentalists at Cairo and elsewhere are trying to amalgamate occidental and oriental ideas in their constitutional mortar-kits, but with all their skill and good intentions they won't get them to blend. The consciences of some who clamoured for interference are becoming disturbed. They find it difficult to reconcile our position with their conception of Christian ethics. That's very likely. But they should have thought of that before. Our hands are to the plough, and we cannot turn back. If we do, woe betide the hapless Fellaheen. Chaos would indeed return. The finances would fastened on by harpies, the taxes would be enforced by

the curbash, justice would be bought and sold, the group of slothful and mendacious pashas and unprincipled and greedy usurers, who constitute the entourage of the Khedive, would revel in their regained liberty to rob and ravage. We voluntarily undertook the task, and duty, interest, and humanity require us to stick to it. Cairo, too, is on the way to the Cape. Along it we will find sales for our goods, fields for our enterprise, scope for our philanthropy. There are roads to make, markets to open, lands to till, and slaves to emancipate. No grander outlet offers for colonising genius. The marvel is that it should have been opened by men who, three years ago, made society vocal with their denunciations of the sin and danger of national acquisitiveness. But it is only another version of the world-wide truth, that circumstances are often stronger than men—even the strongest.

In foreign affairs there is a superficial tranquillity, but there are clouds on the horizon that may swell into a storm. When Europe is bristling with bayonets, fear rather than confidence is excited by ostentatious assurances that all is serene. Englishmen are grieved and bewildered when they see the young Republic of France copying the discredited policy of despotic kings or doomed usurpers. Nations, like individuals, after great misfortunes, usually strive to consolidate their strength and regain their prestige by avoiding adventures. After Königgrätz, Austria recast her polyglot empire and accorded to each nationality the inestimable boon of self-government. After the Crimean war Russia developed her means of internal intercourse. After the treaty of Tilsit the Prussians, their credit gone and their cities in ruins, formed the famous Tugenbund and betook themselves—the world knows with what brilliant success—to organic, educational, agrarian, and military reforms. But France, while still under the shadow of a terrible disaster, is restless, if not turbulent. There is no

method either in her movements. Eighteen months ago she refused to send a soldier to guard a canal, designed by her own engineers, and made with her own money. Now she is sending men to perish and money to squander in tropical thickets and cane-brakes, where victory can bring her no renown and where defeat may entail calamity. She wrangles with liberal Italy, quarrels with constitutional Spain, and strives to strike up a dubious friendship with despotic Russia. She hesitated to send a representative to the Berlin Congress one year, and the next she discussed the possibility of despatching armed aid to belligerent Greece. She long fretted under clerical restraints, yet, when free, she uses her power with childish and retaliatory intolerance. This friction may work mischief to the Republic and trouble to Europe. Let us hope that it is only a passing aberration—the rebound from an irksome effacement. Englishmen have a strong, sincere, and steady attachment to France. We admire her chivalrous sentiment of national honour, her enthusiasm for abstract ideas, her grace, genius, wit, and vivacity. No temporary difference or irritation will shake this friendship; but we follow with misgivings and regret the vagaries of her opportunist politicians. We wish her well. We begrudge her no distinction. But we cannot but see that she is surrounded by mistrustful, if not hostile neighbours, and a stumble may bring back the sordid Bourbons or the selfish Bonapartes. Every nation typifies an idea; France represents equality—without which complete civilisation is impossible. England represents industry—the foundation of freedom. The progress of mankind depends on the union of the two nations—the mingling of the two ideas. There can be friendly competition between us, but there need be neither anger or envy.

The perennial conflict in the East of Europe has been transferred from the Bosphorus to the Danube. Turkey,

with a reduced but consolidated and reformed empire, might have regained some of her old power, but the Sultan was obdurate and infatuated. He banished his best advisers, took council of his own fears, and seems determined on drifting to destruction. But whatever the future may have in store for him, he has ceased to be the pivot on which the Eastern Question turns. Austria, and not Turkey, is now Russia's competitor for Balkan supremacy. The war of 1866 did more than turn Austria out of the German Confederation—it transformed her, against her will, into a semi-Slav and Oriental state. She is now at Novi-Bazar, and the slightest jerk in the international mechanism would send her to Salonica. This is mainly the work of the astute German Chancellor. By it, Germany gains greatly. Her rivals now neutralise each other. While they watch and wrangle, Germany solidifies her power and prepares for the delayed, but inevitable, encounter between Slav and Teuton. Austria and Russia must collide. They are like two trains on the same metals steaming towards each other. The people of the Danubian States expected when they had banished the Turk that their troubles would terminate. They have discovered their error. They have only exchanged one form of servitude for another. They dream of a confederacy. Every liberal Englishman would like to see it realised. But it is only a dream. They are held hard fast between hammer and anvil. Neither of their neighbours means them to be independent. Their position is only provisional. Meanwhile, the country that has for generations been the cock-pit, has now become the gaming house of Europe. It is seething with intrigue. Its statesmen are playing at hazard with political dynamite for dice. Russia has won the cast in Montenegro and in Bulgaria. Austria in Servia and in Eastern Roumelia. In Roumania the two balance. The coup-d'état at Sophia, the rebellion in

on the state of Ireland. It is like the conduct of the military despot who, having trampled liberty under foot with his armed forces, declared order at last existed. When personal liberty is suspended, we have arrived at a stage only short of civil war." Mr. Gladstone was out of office then. He is in office now, and may see matters in a different light. But if his position is changed, his reasoning has not lost its cogency.

Party rhetoricians admit the disaffection, but attribute it to the machinations of a cabal of agitators, who abet assassins and utilize outrage. Balderdash! Can agitators, any more than other men, light a fire without fuel, or sustain a revolution without reason. It never was done. It never will be done. But for argument's sake, let the charge stand. And what does it prove? What, but that our policy has failed! If the people ever were terrorized over by a social vehmic, they are not so now, or what has been the use of our crushing coercion? Yet being free, they cling all the closer to the alleged terrorist. From Monaghan to Mallow, from Mallow to Wexford, to Sligo, and to Limerick, north, south, east, and west, in county and in borough, by farmers and by shopkeepers, the candidates of these outrage-mongers are everywhere returned. If the agitators are in league with assassins, then the people are in league with the agitators. When an entire people are against the law, the law is wrong. When the populace are in sympathy with crime, the mode of rule under which that is possible is by that very fact condemned. To convict the Irish representatives of being accessories to outrage, is to convict the people of the same offence, and to convict the people is to condemn the Government. Disparaging comparisons are drawn between the present and the past popular leaders. We are reminded that Wolfe Tone was a capable soldier, that O'Connell and Butt were

great lawyers, that the men of '48 were poets and orators, who, in other spheres and under happier influences, served the State and proved their powers. I will not contest the comparison. But it makes against those who draw it. All national movements require either a great man or a great principle. If the Irish have not got the man they have got the principle. Their advocates, if not great, are genuine. They are racy of the soil. They spring from and belong to the people. They know their wants and share their aspirations, and their very mediocrity constitutes their strength.

An unfailing test of the sincerity with which a man holds his principles is his willingness to pay for them in person and purse. During the last few years hundreds of Irishmen have gone to gaol and thousands more have contributed to their defence and support. Well nigh half a million pounds have been raised in that time for political and agrarian purposes. Much of this, it is true, has come from America, but large contributions have recently been raised at home, and under very adverse conditions. The Government, unable to restrain the collections itself, stealthily sought the help of the Pope. But both Papal disapproval and official opposition were unavailing. Persecutions do not crush, they fortify convictions. When the numbers of the population, the means of the contributors, and the unique opposition are considered, the testimonial recently presented to Mr. Parnell—equals, or more than equals, that raised by populous and wealthy England for Mr. Cobden on the morrow of the great Free Trade victory. This testimonial is the last but not the least striking proof of an intense and sustained national sentiment. It is plain enough to anyone but ourselves, but we cannot, or at least we do not, see it. We would see it, however, clearly enough and preach no end of homilies concerning it if it occurred in a distant country and under foreign rule.

What is the cause of this irreconcilability? Scotland and Wales are reconciled to us. What prevents Ireland being so? There are many subsidiary, but, to my mind, two main reasons—one political, and one social. Our administration is ostentatiously anti-Irish. It does not study, or if it does study, it does not heed, the people's idiosyncrasies. It is the least national and the most centralised Government in Europe. All our changes notwithstanding, the mass of the Irish people are as much outside the ruling pale as they were in the days of the avowed ascendency. We have never incorporated them. It is not their positive suffering but the sense of exclusion and injustice that is so insufferable. We do not trust them, and they do not trust us. Time has not drawn his oblivious veil over a dishonouring and disastrous past. Seven-tenths of the Irish people are of one race, religion, and order of politics. Three-tenths are of another. The three-tenths monopolize the places of trust and authority, and the seven-tenths protest and agitate, and would rebel if they could. This is the political grievance. All our concessions have come too late. They have either been extorted by embarrassment or by fear. They have allayed no resentment or evoked no friendship. The social difficulty springs from imperfect sympathy. We live under a bourgeoise oligarchy tempered by aristocratic influences and prepossessions. The workmen may some day assert themselves, but so far they have not done so. Our middle classes have many virtues. They are earnest, energetic, and enterprising, but, politically, they are austere, narrow, and ungenial. They mean well to the Irish, and would make sacrifices to serve them, but they don't know how. They conceive that all that they want is money, and they throw a new Land Bill at them, as they would throw a bone at a dog, and cry, "Take it and be content." The Irish do take it, make the most

of it, and are not content. And they won't be. Our countrymen do not realize that it is not a gift only but a state of feeling, an attitude of mind, that is required to draw the two peoples together. It is difficult for a rigid, methodical, Puritanic Englishmen with all his push and thrift and tact to appreciate the bright, quick witted, imaginative and emotional Roman Catholic Celt with his slovenliness, and irregularity, his strange mixture of acuteness and simplicity, of melancholiness and mirth. We forget that men are ruled as much by their hearts as by their heads. Our Government wants the very features that are most attractive to Irishmen. I all but despair of seeing an assimilation between such incompatibles as the Irish peasant and the English tradesman. But they may advance, each in their own way, side by side, in a career of reciprocal amity.

We can continue to rule Ireland from Westminster as we do at present. We can make it a Crown colony or we can concede it self-government. If we follow the first plan our Parliament will be discredited and its influence lessened, for the Irish party will always be strong enough to turn the scale in delicate divisions and to impede legislation. If we lower the franchise and lessen the number of members we won't mend matters. The proportion of Nationalists in the reduced roll will be increased. Ireland is too big to rule for any length of time as we do the Mauritius, the Fiji, or the Falkland Isles. If we tried, remonstrances would come thick and fast from America and the Colonies—such remonstrances as we sent to Turkey about Bulgaria, and to Russia about Poland. If these remonstrances were discarded, something more serious might follow. There is an invisible power in Irish politics which no Coercion Acts can reach. It would be hazardous to predict what complications the steady and active hatred of eight or ten millions of Irishmen, wielding great political

power in America, might involve us in in a time of trouble. But Ireland as a Crown colony is little more than a political figment undeserving of discussion. Ireland, however, as a self-governing section of the United Kingdom, would be a reality—a peaceful and prosperous reality. Home rule means improved union, and not separation. The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man have it. Are they not parts of the United Kingdom? In Canada, at the Cape, and in the Australian colonies there is the fullest form of self-government, and are they not parts, loyal and contented parts, of the Empire? When there are already eighteen independent Parliaments in the British dominions it is only prejudice that can contend that another would make the difference between union and dismemberment.

Goethe said that the English were a very practical but a very pedantic people. And he was right. Your practical man of the world is useful enough in his sphere. He is great upon expenditure. That is the tie that attaches him to his fellows. But he is ignorant of ideas, and unable to deal with aspirations. He cannot reach the lofty regions of sentiment and imagination. He cares only for what lies within the limits of the day, and he has proved himself pre-eminently unfit to rule Ireland. Pedants are persons under the control of phrases. They give a cause or a scheme a bad name, and they get frightened at it—the name, not the thing. Partisans have decried Home Rule, and the people have caught up the cry without inquiring what it means. It means no more than giving to Irishmen the same home liberties as Manxmen and Jerseymen have had for centuries, and which we have more recently conferred, with such beneficial results, on the colonies. We have tried to rule Ireland by the army, by the Church, by the landlords, and by the three combined. All these agencies have failed, and brought us only shame and humiliation. Let us now

try to rule her by her own people. We can only keep our world-wide Empire—the legacy our fathers left us, the heritage we owe to our sons—and which I for one am prepared to hold at all hazards by conceding to the diverse nationalities within it liberty to work out their own national life in their own way. A genial diversity will give elasticity and strength; a Procrustian uniformity weakness.

Time has been wasted and temper lost in discussing whether the first work of the next session should be a London Government or a Suffrage Bill. It has been a tempest in a teapot. The Government is pledged to initiate legislation on both subjects, and the order of procedure can be left to the Cabinet. There may be reasons determining their action, the force of which outsiders cannot measure. Much, too, may happen before February. A fresh False Prophet may arise, or the old one may cause further trouble. But, assuming the absence of deterring circumstances, there is no reason why both bills should not be dealt with. So far as the people are concerned, the Suffrage Bill is already carried. Parliament ought not to dally with it longer. It must be passed, and it would be well if it were passed quickly. But if it is to fight for precedence in an unwieldy programme, if it is now and again to be jostled out of place by minor measures, the session may slip away before much progress is made. One thing at a time, and that thing thoroughly, is the way to get through work in Parliament, as in the world. Let us have either Bill first the Cabinet chooses, but both before the dissolution. It is to be hoped that the Suffrage Bill will include Ireland, and that it will not include redistribution. Redistribution is required urgently enough, but it can follow the franchise. The two together would cause complication, and complication would cause delay.

Efforts will be made to substitute tentatively, and

States the men selected are usually only the standard bearers of party warfare, who are as much under discipline as their prototypes. They vote as they are told, and cheer their leaders when they are farthest wrong. Men of marked character, with originality and comprehensiveness of thought, won't submit to be made automatons of, and they retire from public life in disgust and disappointment. This explains the sameness, sterility, and corruption of American politics. Any scheme that will avert such mischief, that will give to all parties and principles their just weight in our National Assembly, that would encourage individual intelligence and responsibility, and raise political life out of the ruts of management, is entitled to the thoughtful consideration of all unprejudiced persons. Mr. Hare's scheme is theoretically perfect, but whether it is workable or not in our complicated constituencies is a question that can only be settled by trial. A half-hearted recognition of the truth that the old plan of voting works injustice had led to the adoption of minority and cumulative voting. But neither of these plans has succeeded. They have increased the stringency of party organisation and intensified the evils of electioneering. We have experimented with a limited vote; why can't we do so with the proportional plan? Why not try London? It affords many facilities. It has contiguity, if not homogeneity, and there cannot well be any jerrymandering. Its borough boundaries are arbitrary, not historic. It has little corporate life, and less local patriotism. Its vast population is a trouble, if not a terror to our legislators. The pervading indifference of the well-to-do classes may disappear when every man knows his vote will count, and feels that he is not a tool in the hands of election managers. But whether these be the results or not, the trial can injure no one, as by adopting it we violate no constitutional

principles. If it fails, it can be abandoned. It cannot well be a greater failure than the three-cornered system.

But whether such an experiment is or is not tried, reformers should insist on some approach to direct representation being made. Let every constituency have one member, every elector one vote, and require that vote to be exercised where the owner resides. It is said that this would necessitate the creation of electoral districts, but it would not. Abstractedly, electoral districts are right, but there is a creditable feeling in favour of preserving old landmarks, and it ought to be respected. This desire may be gratified and the idea of single representation reached. Formerly, Northumberland was one constituency. Now it is two. Why not make it four, giving each division one member? Why should the people in Newcastle have two votes each and the people in Gateshead only one? Can Newcastle not be divided as easily as Northumberland, and other large constituencies also? I fail to see either constitutional or practical reasons against such a plan. It would secure an independence to the individual voter which it would be difficult for the hardest party organisation to manipulate. It is intelligible; the most illiterate can understand it. It will lighten the burden of political domination, and it would retain the historic names.

If a suffrage bill is passed, it is said a dissolution must follow. It may, but it is not true that it must. If it does, little would be lost. Parliaments are like rivers—the further they run the dirtier they get. Detailed forecasts as to the anticipated reform are premature. Our political astrologers have not data sufficient from which to cast the horoscope. The conditions are too numerous, widespread, and complex to draw elaborate inferences. Probably the results will disappoint both parties. Constitutional changes usually do. Who is not now amused at the

not only fresh reforms but fresh principles. New circumstances require new men and a new creed. Modern society is made up of class layers, between whom there is little intercourse. Its face has been smoothed, but how deep the refining process has penetrated, it is difficult to decide. Opinions vary as to the standard by which the position and prosperity of the nation should be judged. Some take statistics as the test, but alone they are unsafe guides. Like the sieve of Danaides, they are good to look upon, but will not hold conclusions. The old proverb says: "As the statist thinks, the bell clinks." It is not by a man's wages alone you can tell his income. You must know the constancy of his employment, the cost of living, his broken time, and his habits. Externally the English workman of to-day is in advance of his progenitors. He has better and speedier means of locomotion, cheaper food and clothing, extended information, and he is not addicted to the coarse and brutal pastimes of the past. But these improvements are general, not special. They apply to society at large, and not to a class. Men measure their well-being by their neighbours and not by their ancestors. It is their comparative and not their absolute or abstract condition that concerns them. Workmen have many comforts now their fathers had not, but the gap between them and the modern capitalist is greater than that between the old squire and his labourers. We have gained in strength by the new system, but we have lost in sympathy. The personal ties that bound the head of the little workshop to his helpers are broken, or rather never existed in our leviathan establishments where the workman is but a part of the plant, and the sole nexus that unites him to his employer is cash. Enlightened men do their best to bridge this gulf, but the system will not permit the restoration of that direct and friendly intercourse between the two classes that once existed. In this

severance there lies present weakness and future danger. But it is not the skilled but the skill-less—the layer below the artisan and above the pauper whose case presses. Their surroundings are physically depressing and morally degrading. Purity is pent up in the same noisome den as corruption. The two are tied together, as the Latin tyrant tied the dead corpse and the living victim. The talking orders can speak for themselves in Parliament or elsewhere, but the dingy, dwarfed, shrivelled, millions cannot. They have to find a vent for their discontent by any orifice available. History, in Belshazzar's fire cyphers, proclaims that the decadence of that nation has begun where the poor exist as a race apart and without moral unison with the other classes.

Whilst bickering partisans fight out their broils—can nothing be done to help those helpless ones? The inquirer raises afresh the old controversy of State versus individual action. Both doctrines, if pushed to extremes, are wrong, and both, if not so pushed, are right. We should at starting extract and utilise every faculty and virtue of the individual. Any law or custom that dwarfs that development, that curtails that power, is enervating and vicious. But there is work that individuals cannot do, or cannot do so well as the State, and there corporate action must be resorted to. Where individual action is to end and the State to begin must be decided by the work and the circumstances. Cries for and against State interference come in cycles. The prayer of the reformers of last century was to be let alone—to fetter the State and let loose the man. For a couple of generations the demand was for liberty, even liberty to pit the bones and muscles of half-fed children against metal valves—the human heart against iron pistons. It was driven too far. Atheistic do-nothingism, the snug philosophy of the breeches pocket, the comfortable, cosy creed of the good

man who never cut a throat nor dishonoured a bill, but who ground the last stroke out of the puny, pallid factory hands, produced a reaction, and set the steam of popular sentiment into the other channel. It looks as if it would run too far in the new course. Some are unconsciously asking for the revival of sections of the Sumptuary Laws. Whenever a difficulty arises we run to the Government, clamour for new inspectors, more police, and fresh restrictions. When the Hindoos experienced the good results of the plough they made it, not its originator or its results, but the inanimate piece of wood and iron, an object of worship. Many Englishmen seem resolved to idolise in like manner State machines. Board of Trade inspection may be necessary, but would not the loss at sea be lessened if society put its ban upon the men who gamble in human life for their own gain? Our liquor regulations are defective, but if the same energy that is expended in the endeavour to get new laws was expended in creating new habits, would we not sooner secure a sober population? Let us have fewer laws, more men—valiant, self-centred men—less machinery, and more steam, and our progress will be as rapid, and much more reliable.

The primary purpose of Government is to guard its citizens against aggression; to secure to each the unhindered power to pursue his own good. It is not to pursue that good for him. It is the right and the duty of the State to protect those who cannot protect themselves. But it is neither its right nor its duty to regulate the actions of grown men by an infinite number of minute and vexatious provisions. Mr. Herbert Spencer contends, with unanswerable force, that the best mechanism is that which contains fewest parts and is the least complex. The constituencies transfer their power to Parliament, the Parliament transfers it to the Government, the Government to the Cabinet, the Cabinet to departments or to boards, the boards to

inspectors, and the inspectors to sub-inspectors—all acting through a series of levers, each of which absorbs in friction and in inertia parts of the moving force, which, in private undertakings, is direct and simple. Co-operative, friendly, and trade societies well illustrate the workings of willinghood. They have, amongst their members, abolished the demoralising system of credit, almost abolished strikes, and extracted the sting from the Poor Laws. Wholesome vigour is lent to public life by such efforts. Individual exertion secures independence in thought and energy in action. These in their turn re-act on the nation. Disasters and difficulties, which would have crushed less vigorous men, serve but to rouse them to greater vitality. On the other hand, a State-controlled, law-pampered people, without initiative or resource, becomes stationary, tame, and nerveless—the easy victims or the ready agents of tyrants. Patriotism can never be generated or kept alive by a passive enjoyment of sordid and spiritless comfort. Let our projects, therefore, for social betterance be voluntary if possible—corporate if necessary—but let us not destroy the spirit of self-effort and self-reliance by which the most gigantic and most insignificant projects of civilized life have been started and sustained.

Under any form of Government, but especially in a Democracy, which, whether we like it or not, will be the rule of the future, the proper discharge by each citizen of his individual duties, is as essential to the welfare of the whole as the purity of each drop of blood is to the healthiness of the human body. Aristocracy is class rule, Ochlocracy is mob rule. Timocracy is the rule of the rich, but Democracy is people's rule, the rule of all, rich and poor, lord and labourer, priest and layman. It draws its strength and its dignity from its universality and its freedom. It cannot disown the past and it does not disparage it. Each

order has done its allotted task, and has been useful in its day. All were links in the unerring process of political and social revolution. The Aristocracy broke the power of the Court and gave us national courage, culture, and refinement. The middle classes broke the power of the Aristocracy, and gave us liberty of thought, education, and commerce. The workmen are in embryo. We cannot foretell their future. They are untrammelled with old habits and systems, and they have a progressive spirit and broad sympathies. They should lift politics out of the idealess level of hucksterers and drill sergeants. They should move at times not in the beaten tracks, but upon new ground. They should be something more than a link in the chain of machine politicians. They should be the propagandists of noble principles—should seek the victory of reason over force, enlightenment over superstition, justice over crime, morality over vice. Philosophers tell us that life consists in the efforts to assert itself, but it cannot assert itself if it is to be a bald copy of some one else's life, whose judgments are to be unquestioned, and whose behests are to be obeyed. Let every man use his own faculties—inquire for himself, and when he has arrived at a conclusion, let him speak it—act it—act it regardless of any mystifying despotism that may have temporarily got astride the popular breath. Do not let him duck under it, nor go about to circumvent it, or pinch it to suit an audience, or water it with honeydrops to suit the prejudices of his friends. Out with it bravely, and take the consequences, whether they be anathema or ostracism. A man may get notoriety—the juggler's reward—by pretence. But nothing more, not even as much as belief. Shuffle as much as he may, he cannot shuffle himself out of his responsibility. In the end he must rely upon himself. Better live in a tub with Diogenes, and be free, than be a whimpering puppet or bedizened

lackey in the palace of any Alexander. But with your independence mingle tolerance, and with your courage sympathy, for on the eve of the natal day of Him who, eighteen hundred years ago, preached the glad doctrines of humanity and brotherhood, this sin-stained world is in sad want of both. The stifled echo of His trials and teachings reverberate through the ages, and calls us all again to faith and labour, to duty and to service.

IX.—GENERAL GORDON AND THE SOUDAN.

House of Commons, February 19th, 1884.

In support of Sir Stafford Northcote's resolution censuring the Government for "their vacillating and inconsistent course in the Soudan."

I am sorry to interpose between the House and the number of hon. members who wish to speak, but I hold strong views on the subject. I have made the Eastern question a study for the greater part of my life, and I will condense what I have to say into the fewest possible sentences. A graver issue, I maintain, is raised by this resolution than the reputation or even the fate of a Cabinet. It not only involves our honour as a nation, but the highest interests of humanity and civilisation. It is too serious for recrimination; and if the disturbing news received within the last twelve hours is reliable, it is too urgent for expatiatory disquisition. There is much truth in what was said by my hon. friend the member for Galway. No sophistry can reconcile the professions of Liberals when in opposition with their practice when in office on this and kindred questions. The subtle art of Parliamentary manœuvring furnishes few more flagrant instances of political tergiversation than the invasion of Egypt at the instance of men who four years ago cried themselves hoarse in denouncing the sin of national acquisitiveness and the danger of military adventure. But putting in juxtaposition the profuse contradictions of Ministers—although a tempting theme for partisan combatants—will serve no useful end. Ministers are assured in advance of absolution for any offence against consistency, either past or prospective. Anti-aggressionists and quondam peace

men will support them whether they order an expedition to Gondokora or to Greenland—to the regions of everlasting snow or the regions of everlasting sand.

The Government turned their backs on their election speeches when they went to Egypt, and they can just as easily, and with equal immunity, turn their backs on any subsequent pledges. They need have no scruple on this head. Party injury there would be none, whatever course they adopt.

Speakers on this side of the House have assured us that Ministers want to leave Egypt. No one doubts it. The desire has been made plain in interminable speeches, and by copious correspondence. The complaint is not that they wish to leave, but that they think it is possible to do so. It is their judgment, not their sincerity, that is impeached. They never tire of telling us that unexpected events have delayed their departure. But these events were inevitable. They were the pre-ordained outcome of their policy. They were foreseen by everyone except the Ministry and their unreflecting friends. Any man with the most rudimentary knowledge of Eastern affairs ought to have known that the mongrel administrative machine we have stuck up at Cairo would not work. It required no political prescience to foretell that. We once tried a ricketty apparatus of a like kind in India under more promising conditions and with abler men. The French, too, tried one in Algiers. But they both failed; and from their very nature, all such nondescript contrivances must fail. You cannot have a Government in which Eastern and Western ideas and influences have equal authority. Such a combination never was and never will be successful unless the two races are radically changed. Wherever they meet, one must be master. Ministers have attempted an impossibility. They are very clever, but they are not wizards. They cannot overturn the insti-

tutions of a country one week, and by a wave of the hand or a shake of General Gordon's cane recreate them the next. They cannot in a decade, much less in a day, develop amongst an ignorant and long-enslaved population the political wisdom requisite to cope with the gravest difficulties. They will be disorganised; there must be delay. They should have calculated on this, and prepared for it. Ministers went to Egypt to overthrow a military despotism. They remained there to re-establish order. That is their own version of the enterprise. They are as much masters there as they are in India or in Ireland—in some respects even more so. The Soudan was in revolt. They think its retention a source of weakness and danger rather than strength to Egypt. Yet they acquiesced in Hicks Pasha's effort to reconquer it. When he was slain and his soldiers were slaughtered they forbade further warfare. They possessed the same power before as they did after he was killed. They should either have prevented the expedition or seen that it was prosecuted with some prospect of success. They did neither. If they had interfered they would have saved 11,000 lives and probably a million of money. They permitted the expedition; they would have shared its glory if it had been successful; and they must share in the humiliation of its defeat. They allowed Baker Pasha's little army to be cut in pieces within sight of our ships, within sound of our guns. Not a shot was fired, not a man was landed. But after the rout we hurried forward marines to Suakim—too late to help, too few to act independently. Can any wordspinning free us from responsibility for such callous and culpable neutrality? After the massacre of Kashgill, we counselled a resort to negotiations with the rebellious tribes. While the purchasing process was proceeding, we proclaimed our resolve to leave the Soudan to the slaveholders and the Mahdi. Was ever folly more wanton?

Was ever blabbing more cruel? Arab chiefs, like more pretentious persons elsewhere, side with the strongest. This announcement blasted any chance General Baker ever had of buying them off.

Notwithstanding their verbal repudiation of liability for the Soudan, they sent a British officer to organise the surrender of the Equatorial and Western provinces. No Government can abandon a million square miles of territory and ten million people unless it is sovereign of the country relinquished. And yet, in face of this self-evident fact, Ministers have the hardihood to insist on their unaccountability. The Government could have prevented, and ought to have prevented, the carnage before Sinkat. Where was the frothy sympathy that bubbled over the Bulgarian insurrection when the trusty Tewfik and his famishing comrades fought for freedom, home, and duty? Where was the redundant rhetoric that descanted on Turkish horrors, where was the fiery grandeur of generous minds, when every wind that blew wafted across the saddening plain the piteous wail of women and children who were perishing for their fathers' and husbands' fidelity to us, or to the cause we had made our own? Where were the masters of England's puissant legions when the intrepid garrison—their last hope gone—spiked their guns, blew up their fortifications, and sailed forth to desperate death? Where? Waiting, nervelessly, waiting for a needless telegram from Berber and, huckster-like, counting the cost. There are crises in which vacillation is an offence and hesitation an atrocity. Revolving years will bring the day when murmuring discontent will demand reparation for interests endangered, honour tarnished, and humanity sacrificed.

The same course of shuffle and pretence is held in Egypt proper as in the Soudan. To cover the fiction of a native Government—for it is but a fiction—we have

doubled every post in the Administration. At a cost of £15,000 a year, we maintain a group of dummy Ministers, while we pay half as much more to supply these dummies with English under-secretaries who do the work—the dummies meanwhile intriguing against England and her agents. The public debt is administered by a board which entails an annual expense of £11,000. This board is merely a device for finding places for hungry European officials. Any banker would keep the accounts for nothing. In the same way the railways have a board whose members absorb between them nearly one per cent. of the net receipts. We have killed some thousands of the Egyptians, thrown their affairs into inextricable confusion, and immensely increased the cost of Government; yet we required payment with nauseous exactness of a quarter of a million a year for the army of occupation. To meet the financial pressure, the Khedive and some of his Ministers have made creditable sacrifices in their salaries. Humbler employés, legally entitled to pensions, have been dismissed without them. But we stick to the letter of our bond, and money borrowed at 3 per cent. we require 5 per cent. for—the interest being wrung from the hard earnings of a wretched peasantry. We acquiesced in the abolition of the capitulations in Tunis and France which have for this country existed for centuries; but more recent and much less defensible concessions in Egypt we allow to continue. We have not courage to touch the liquidation scheme, although it is impossible to conceive anything more absurd, almost ludricous, than the maintenance of a sinking fund for the payment of an old loan when we are helping the country to contract new ones, and when upon a portion of the floating debt compound interest is accumulating.

There never can be contentment in Egypt so long as the richest section of the population remains

unamenable to the law of the land. There never can be prosperity as long as the choicest soil is worked at a ruinous loss under the terms of the convention which, if not projected, is protected by us. Historians for ages have dwelt with sympathetic eloquence on the sufferings of the fellaheen, but never in all the dreary record of their wrongs have they been more shamefully oppressed, plundered and misgoverned than by the hybrid despotism we have placed over them. The Government have told us of many beneficent changes that are intended. But these as yet exist only or mainly on paper. They are not realities. Justice is still bought and sold; corruption is still rampant; the finances are in chaos; trade is paralysed; the population is sulky, turbulent, or despondent; and the whole country is distracted by the distrust and uncertainty which our vacillation has produced. The Government should have realised their responsibilities, and if they were frightened at them, should not have undertaken them. It is mean and cowardly to trot out once more the silly excuse of a "Tory legacy." That convenient legacy! It is as inexhaustible as a conjuror's bottle. The members of the Government live upon legacies. They come from all countries and are of all kinds—Irish, Egyptian, Afghan, African. What would Ministerial speakers have done without them? But mark how plain a tale will put this one down. France was more than our ally—she was our partner—in Egypt. She was equally with us responsible for the Control. She protested against Arabi's action, but she was wise enough not to fight. If our Government disliked military intervention so much, why did they not follow France's example? Why? Was it because they expected to reap a little cheap glory all to themselves? Whether it was or not they got it. We beat the trembling, feeble rustics at Tel-el-Kebir. We are now paying for that easy-got victory. It is pusill-

animous of Ministers to cry like timid schoolboys to their opponents, "You did it." No, sir (pointing to the Opposition bench), you did not do it. They (pointing to the Treasury bench)—they did it. And let them stand like men to the consequences of their act. It is just as unworthy for them to shelter themselves behind the shivering Khedive. He is a poor protection. The only initiative we have left him is power to stagger into a mess and drag his country after him. Limited intervention anywhere or at any time is difficult. In Egypt it is an impossibility.

The Government have been busy with an elaborate system of self-deception for months past. From the day the Prime Minister declared that the bombardment of Alexandria was not war to the day when the Cabinet despatched an English officer first to rule and then to surrender a country they ostentatiously proclaimed their irresponsibility for, they have been playing with words. Let us be done with this puerile pedantry. It deceives no one but those who practise it. The whole world sees through the flimsy subterfuge, and laughs at it. We must either rule Egypt openly and effectively, or leave it. We cannot, in my judgment, leave it. Interest, honour, humanity, forbid us. We carried all the horrors of war into their country, upset the Government, and destroyed the army. Mankind would execrate us if—having reduced the people to helplessness and stripped them of their means of defence—we left them a prey to ruthless invasion from without and remorseless robbery and tyranny within. The right hon. gentleman the member for Bradford, my hon. friend the member for Oxfordshire, and others have made speeches in favour of the resolution; but they all closed with the impotent and contradictory intimation that they would not support it. I have not yet mastered the subtle political ethics which enable a man to think one way and act another, so I mean to sustain my opinions by my vote.

X.—THE GOVERNMENT POLICY IN THE SOUDAN.

House of Commons, March 15th, 1884.

In support of the member for Northampton's (Mr. Labouchere) amendment—that, "the necessity for the excessive loss of life in the Soudan had not been made apparent."

There are two sets of opponents to the Government's Egyptian policy. The objection of the hon. gentlemen on the other side (the Conservative) is intelligible and consistent. That of some of my friends near me is scarcely so. Three weeks ago they voted with alacrity and enthusiasm confidence in the Cabinet, and approved of its policy. Now, they refuse to ratify that confidence, and they wanted, a day or two since, to deny the Ministers the means of giving effect to their policy. When the Israelites were in Egypt they were required to make bricks without straw; when the English are there they are required by my friends to make war without money. My hon. friend, the member for Merthyr (Mr. H. Richard) detests war. So do most men. But war is often a voluntary self-sacrifice for the holiest centres of human affection. I am for peace; so are we all. So, too, to utilise my hon. friend's simile, are thieves, provided they can retain possession of their plunder. There is something more sacred than life—justice; and something more precious than riches—freedom. And war is often requisite to win and maintain both. I abhor the cowardly selfishness that would wall out the circling world from our

efforts and our sympathies, or that would fight only for the lowest needs of existence, and not for the nobler elements of national purpose. Honour is before interest, and duty before danger.

But to come to the resolution before the House. Are the operations referred to by the member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) necessary and commendable? War is honourable and indispensable when civilisation has to be preserved, national rights upheld, and our native country defended. Do our doings on the shores of the Red Sea come under such a category? What are they for? The Government have repeatedly pronounced the Soudan to be a costly and dangerous appendage to Egypt. They commanded—for no other word expresses their action—the Khedive to abandon it to the unchecked dominion of the slave holders and slave hunters. They despatched General Gordon to Khartoum to effect its evacuation, and to coax the tribes into allowing the garrisons to retire. Our emissary has confirmed the Mahdi's conquests and made him a Sultan at El Obeid. Yet, we slew the Mahdi's men at El Teb and Tamai. By what process of political legerdemain do we reconcile scattering shot and shell amidst the Soudanese by General Graham, and peace proclamations by General Gordon? If we mean to keep the country, our dual operations may be defensible. If we mean to leave it, the fighting a week past Friday, and on Thursday last was unmitigated murder, the stain of which no party whitewashing will ever be able to erase. These dauntless Arabs are not our enemies. According to Ministerial hypothesis, they are our particular friends—men we wish to serve and save. How, then, do we justify drenching their land with tears and manuring it with corpses? Is there no blood-guiltiness in this sanguinary carnage? What avails our maudlin moralising if it cannot stop such tumultuous slaughter—"the heart-borne an-

guish," which while we wrangle in wordy conflict is "stunning with the cries of death many a gentle home?" Has all our holy horror of fighting for prestige evaporated, or is it all cant—intolerable cant? Attempting to rescue the beleaguered garrisons was right; but when one was slaughtered, and the other had surrendered, what need was there for further bloodshed? To protect Suakim, say the Ministers. But Suakim was never seriously menaced. The tribes should have been told that we meant them no harm. The form of sending such a message was kept, but adequate opportunity for reply was not given. Bring every explanation of Ministers to the test of fact, and they are resolvable only under two heads—either they intend to keep the Soudan, and they have fought for that purpose, or they intend to relinquish it, and they have fought for that illusory entity, military glory—a motive which, when Liberals were in Opposition, was denounced by every adjective in the vocabulary of vituperation.

The Government are desired to define their policy. That is almost a work of supererogation. The Prime Minister defined it years ago—when he foretold that the first site we secured in Egypt, be it by larceny or by emption, would be the certain egg of a North African empire. The right hon. gentleman is fulfilling his own prophecy. The site has been got—got by larceny; and a new empire is being founded. Annex Egypt! Why, it is annexed as tightly as India. The marvel is that men versed in affairs, should have ever dreamed, when we once went there, overthrew the Government and destroyed its defences, that we could leave as easily as a crowd leaves a public meeting. Whenever England plants her authority amidst a semi-civilised people, she maintains it. Once there, every step she takes fastens her more firmly. From the character of the two races, retention and advance on our part are

inevitable. It is our destiny and theirs. We can no more escape from it than a man can escape from his shadow. Civilisation marches at the rear of conquest. This experience is as universal and unvarying as cause and effect. The Government are either deceiving themselves or deceiving the country when they foster the hope of acting differently.

Many Liberal members bemoan the situation. It has brought the Government embarrassments that are serious, and may prove fatal. They now realise the possibility that the Reform Bill may be strangled, not by the Lords, but by Egypt. But if such should be the case who will be to blame? They themselves would, and for this reason: it is an open secret that at least thirty Liberal members were opposed to the Egyptian enterprise, but they had not the manliness to say so, when their saying might have stopped it. They saw their friends drifting to the rapids, and they had not the courage to warn them of the danger. They were afraid to speak their minds. It might have disconcerted their chiefs, and that would have been party profanity. Or, it might have displeased the caucus—and that would have been treason. Now all remonstrances are unavailing. The Government cannot recede. There is no armour against inexorable fate. Circumstances which they can neither create nor control will guide their course. The army of occupation may be diminished, or increased, or withdrawn; but British supremacy is as surely settled on the banks of the Nile as on the banks of the Ganges. Its form may vary, but its essence is assured. The Prime Minister's metaphorical egg has been hatched and the brood has taken wing. What the Government are desired to do is to acknowledge this—to shake themselves clear of the atmosphere of mystery and doubt, and apply plain words to palpable facts.

Why all these Delphic deliverances, and these equivo-

cations about obvious and self-evident facts? If we are not the rulers of Egypt, who are? The Khedive has no more initiatory power than the Mahdi—in many respects not as much. What do we do there, or rather what do we not do? We make and unmake Ministries, contract loans, control the exchequer and decree constitutions. We supersede judges, supervise courts, pardon prisoners and pension rebels. We have raised, equipped, and officered a native army, organised a mercenary gendarmerie, and stiffened the two by British troops. We command the whole as directly and as peremptorily as we do the garrison at Gibraltar or a brigade at Aldershot. We plan public works, construct roads, design irrigation, abandon railways, re-organise prisons, re-constitute schools, suspend newspapers and appoint sanitary inspectors. In a word, we direct the external policy, regulate the internal administration, manipulate the finances, constrain the judicature, requisition the military, enact laws, dictate the political, and devise the social mechanism of the country. There is not an official, from the meanest subaltern to the most pretentious pasha, who does not hold his post at our pleasure, and whom we could not order or admonish, coerce or command at will. If that is not government, what is it?

But we do all this vicariously by men in buckram, behind whose clumsy and forbidding lineaments we work like a showman moving marionettes. This duplex action is costly, confusing, complicating and deceiving. Let the Government throw off their vizors and frankly assume responsibility for what they are doing, and propose to do. They, as my friend the member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke) has said, have destroyed the dual control and established a dual administration, which is even more mischievous. They have unsettled every institution for no perceptible advantage and produced a chronic irritation,

XI.—THE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL GORDON.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MAY 13TH, 1884.

In support of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's vote of censure on the Government with reference to General Gordon and Egypt.

Persistent efforts have been made all the session to frown down references to Egyptian affairs. Timid and complacent members have been whipped into the traces of the party team and put to silence, while coteries of local wirepullers have been incited to brand as renegades or obstructionists all who trouble Ministerial equanimity. But the attempt has not succeeded. A throb of anxiety beats from one end of the country to the other. Those who have given voice to it are the truest interpreters of that public opinion which has been so often and so menacingly apostrophised. The ebbing tide of national confidence bids fair to leave the cavillers stranded on the shore of the popular current. No one denies, no one doubts, that the Government are beset with difficulties. Whichever way they turn there are troubles. Whether they go forward or go back, or stand still, they are equally assailed by a raking fire of censure and criticism. But they have their own paralytic policy to blame for this. There is no more desire, on the other side, to gain party advantage out of Ministerial embarrassment than there is on this to evoke party sympathy out of administrative blunders. In such circumstances both sides act very much

alike. No Opposition, either Liberal or Conservative, means mischief to the country. But either will mourn over just as much mischance as will serve to discredit their antagonists.

The Prime Minister said that the resolution before the House needs little discussion. I agree with him. A bald recital of the facts ought to be, and would be sufficient to carry it, were it not for party vassalage. Let the touching telegrams from General Gordon be placarded broadcast; let the cross of manliness and devotion he has raised in far Khartoum be upheld at home, and it would arouse a spirit which would shatter the equivocating and huckstering state-craft whose highest effort is to:

> "Promise, pause, prepare, postpone,
> And end by letting things alone."

We may dispute the wisdom of colonising the Soudan. But it was colonised at the instance of able men who knew more of Egypt and its requirements than we do. We found there thousands of settlers trading on the faith of Egyptian assurances. The Khedive was bound by ties of kinship, interest and humanity to protect them, just as we are to protect men of our race planted in the possessions we have dotted over the surface of the globe. We destroyed his means of doing so, and commanded him to abandon the country. By that act we assumed his obligations. We acknowledged our responsibility when we requisitioned General Gordon, and despatched General Graham to Suakim. Their orders were to rescue the emigrants and soldiers, and retire. They have not been rescued, and are in more peril than ever. The task the Government took on itself has not been executed. It cannot be parried; it must not be repudiated.

It is not the institutions, but the spirit of a people that protects its liberty and sustains its freedom. A moral

inertness may have grown parasitically over popular energies; but although it has cramped, it has not killed their ancient vigour. If Ministers are unable to loosen the Gordian knot that their own ineptitude has tied, they must follow Alexander's example and cut it. They desire to dissociate General Gordon from the garrisons. This is impossible. They sneakingly suggest that he should sacrifice his comrades in captivity and decamp. But they mistake their man. It was the helpless to help, and the hopeless to save, that sent him on his forlorn and chivalrous mission, and he spurns such cowardly counsels. When the intrepid Blake was called on to capitulate at Taunton, he refused with the laconic reply that he had not yet eaten his boots. General Gordon has all the generous audacity of the Commonwealth commander, and will be equally daring and tenacious. He may not have eaten his boots, but his ability or his inability to hold out does not acquit us of our accountability for him, and for those with him.

The Government say they cannot now despatch troops up the Nile. Perhaps not. That, however, is not the opinion of all experts. This is the hottest, but it is not the most unhealthy season of the year. But they could have done so. They did not, or they would not when they might, and now they must bear the odium attaching to their supineness, or negligence, or both. Some hon. members do not trouble themselves about the difficulties of the expedition, only about its price. In the lugubrious and sombre pictures they have drawn every line is a sovereign. The chink of coin, and the dust of trade, are ever present in their arguments and appeals. I, too, am an economist, but I do not approve of the niggard and ungenerous parsimony which looks only at the cost of the public service—not at the mode in which it is performed—and which would put the work of the State on the same footing as

the supply of a workhouse, and have it done by tender, which is meanly mercantile, instead of being broadly national. Life is not existence, but effort. Men cannot vegetate like cabbages. When a nation halts to count the expense of doing its duty, it parts with the essence of its vitality. Other hon. members object to an expedition because scores of lives might be lost to save one. Very likely. But England's amenability for the safety of her citizens, and the redress of their wrongs, is no perfunctory engagement prescribed by charter. It is comprehensive and far-reaching, and cannot be measured with the arithmetical precision of a haberdasher's yard wand. There may be occasions when all the resources of the empire must be staked on exacting reparation for a solitary act of injustice. Blood, it is too true, has often been spilt like water for a statesman's place or a despot's lust. Every sympathetic man longs for the time when intelligence will march over prostrate prejudices and animosities. But that has not yet arrived; and the men who entered with so light a heart on the campaign of 1882 could not, with any show of consistency, ply Parliament with pusillanimous appeals for peace at the price of national reputation and good faith. That there will be men slain if an English army goes to Khartoum is incontestable. But the number will be greater from the decrepitude and nervelessness of Ministers. If we had acted with decision at first, there would have been no war. If we had moved to the relief of Sinkat and Tokar sooner, we should have saved the slaughter, the purposeless slaughter, at El Teb and Tamai. If we had sent 500 sabres to Berber after General Graham's victory, the road to Khartoum would now be open, and the refugees on the way to Cairo. (A voice: "That is your view.") Of course it is my view. I am not accustomed to speak other people's views. It is my practice to think for myself, and when I have arrived at a

times, but indubitable. Is there a partisan present so blind as to argue that the disciplined inaction, the timorous irresolution—which have paralysed energy and destroyed hope, which have compromised property and imperilled lives we had stipulated to defend—would not impair their influence and damage their interest. Some hon. members contend that we should leave Egypt right out—pluck up the institutions we have tried to plant, and abandon General Gordon to the paws of the panther or the spears of the Hadendowa. We could do so. But apart from the craven business of such a course, what would be the consequences? What? Rampant anarchy, usury, outrage, plunder. Blazing torch and gory scimitar would bathe in blood the verdure of the classic valley—a reign of desolation as desperate and as devastating as ever afflicted a long-suffering people. Are hon. members prepared to precipitate such chaos and such carnage—to add to the fury of fanaticism the ravages of servile war? They may disapprove, I certainly do so, of the strategy—diplomatic, political, and military—that has led up to the existing complications. But they cannot evade the consequences they entailed. Although statesmen's views on speculative points might be wide as the poles asunder, they must accept the fatality of deeds done. If the Government left Egypt amidst existing turmoils, not even the commanding personality of the Prime Minister would prevent its overthrow.

General Gordon is accused of inconsistency. The charge cannot in equity be sustained. He has never faltered in his purpose, though he has varied his suggestions to the exigencies. All his plans have been rejected. He has been systematically contravened, thwarted, restrained and trammelled. Not a single request he has made has been complied with, not a solitary proposal has been acted upon. And the Cabinet, after having com-

mitted every error the circumstances allowed, are shabby enough to attribute their own failure to their baulked but sedulous and heroic agent. But whatever may have been General Gordon's changeableness, the Government certainly have revised their original decision respecting the Soudan more than once, and they may with advantage do so again. At first they disowned all liability for it, and ordered its entire and immediate evacuation. That was found impracticable, as well as injudicious and cruel. Then the Red Sea ports were to be retained, as well as the country up to Wady Halfa. But if the Delta is to be defended, General Gordon's last advice must be adopted. It would be disastrous to Egypt if the centre of her trade with Central Africa, and the control of the river on which she depends for existence, were to pass into hostile hands. It would be fatal if she had to submit to the formation of a powerful and aggressive state on her defenceless frontiers. The Mahdi may be master in Kordofan, but there must be a barrier to his advance on Upper Egypt, or Cairo might share the fate of Berber. That barrier could not be held by Egyptians, demoralised by defeat, and disaffected by superstition.

Here again the Government are confronted with their initial difficulties—hampered with the dual authority and haunted by a morbid dread of incurring responsibility. There are two ways open to them. They could rule Egypt by Eastern methods—that is by the bastinado and bribery. But that would be repugnant to our traditions, training, and convictions. However faulty any plan they may sanction may be, it must conform in some measure to Western ways and ideas—it must be just, law-abiding, and progressive. Ministers think they can attain this conformation by a bifarious bureaucracy, by a hierarchy of administrators controlled by foreign advisers. They cannot. They might as well try to mix oil and water. A

Aggression forsooth! Why, what modern Administration has in so short a space of time, made such additions to the Empire? Run over the list. They have proclaimed the entire coast, not already appropriated, from Port Elizabeth to Delagoa Bay to be under British protection. If, by a prevaricating diplomacy they have lost Angra Pequena, they have made amends by assuming legal dominion over the Lower Valley of the Niger. Bechuanaland, Basutoland, Pondoland, Zululand, and the Amatonga country, if they have not positively taken, they have intimated they will prevent others doing so. Ours, too, is the southern seaboard of New Guinea, Louisiade, and the adjacent islands, while the Queen has been advised to accept the suzerainty of the lands ceded by the Sultans of North Borneo to a company of British adventurers. They have resumed the construction of the railway towards Candahar which in a fit of party pique they pulled up. The Scinde desert is thus being bridged, Quetta is absorbed, and outposts in the Pishin Valley, conquered by General Roberts, are retained. We pay the Ameer of Afghanistan an annual subsidy of £120,000, three times as much as we pay the Prince of Wales, we supply him with munitions of war, direct his foreign policy, and are now delimiting his frontiers. He is as much a British as the Emirs of Bokhara and of Khiva are Russian vassals. We are facetiously assured that the Afghans have recovered their independence. In Egypt we are absolute. We are there, and there our authority, if not our arms, all lachrymose vaticinations to the contrary notwithstanding, will abide. The most dexterous special pleader, or the most belated panegyrist, cannot reconcile this catalogue of annexations, occupations, and protectorates, with the ascetic programme promulgated by the Government four years ago.

How comes the contradiction? Thus. There are two policies—an insular and an imperial. The advocates of

the first would endanger great objects to save expense and avoid obligations. The advocates of the second contend that the Empire can only be held by the display of the spirit that won it—and that to imperil it would be to cripple commerce and jeopardise civilisation. The first is easily sustained amidst the polemics of the platform, but not so easily amidst the responsibilities of the council chamber. National traditions, colonial exigencies, inexorable circumstances, and the steady force of trained opinion combine to modify the application of so seemingly self-denying yet really so selfish a creed. When emergencies arise, Ministers with disciplined inaction take up an obtusely negative attitude. Under pressure they waver, and then, with tremulous precipitation, yield. But this process occasions embarrassments, increases the cost, and sometimes drives them to adopt high-handed proceedings to recover advantages they never should have lost. This is my hypothesis of their indecision. It does not arise from insincerity or conscious inconsistency, but from their ineptitude in adjusting their policy to the irresistible drift of human affairs. They allow their theories to colour their observations, and argue from principles to facts instead of from facts to principles.

What ought to be England's relation to her dependencies, and what her attitude to the States with which they may draw her into collision, are questions which recent events have forced into delicate prominence. Historians and political economists, students and statesmen, have long discussed them, but they have not yet passed into current controversy. Vast projects of human transplantation, involving to us paramount issues, are being unfolded, but the mass of our countrymen survey the process with stoical imperturbation. The order of history is apparently being reversed. Heretofore civilisation, enfeebled by luxury or lulled into lethargy by success, has

and factories. Colonisation thus relieves one labour market and supplies another. It carries the superfluities of one part of the world to repair the deficiencies of another part. By this reciprocity it augments the resources and contributes to the equitable distribution of the race. The benefits it confers, however, are not merely mercenary and ethnographical. Is it nothing to have pushed our pioneers into the remotest recesses of primeval forests, and to have fixed our flag in the barrenest as well as in the richest regions? Is there no satisfaction in having peopled and planted groups of communities, amongst whom, whatever befalls the old country, her institutions, traditions, and manners will survive? Is this world-wide reproduction of that combination of independence and discipline, of freedom and order, of enterprise and endurance, which constitute the salient features of the English character, a result to be measured by money? Wealth alone never will nor can sustain a State. If it is to thrive, the higher and nobler faculties of our nature must be brought into play. Sybarites soon sink to the level of their brother brutes. It is the soul which creates itself a body—the idea which makes itself a habitation. A nation is not a fortuitous multitude whom circumstances have called together, and may again divide. It is a commonwealth of free men, labouring fraternally for a common aim. It has a mission and it has duties, towards the performance of which the faculties and forces of its sons should be dedicated. One of the duties demanded of Englishmen is the extension of the benefits conferred by liberty and of the security conferred by law to the communities created by their enterprise. But the aborigines—what of them amidst our industrial crusading? Have they no rights? Sancho Panza's idea of colonising an island was to sell the inhabitants into slavery, and put the money into his pocket. Sancho's countrymen did that, and something more. They shot those they could not sell.

Without extenuating such cupidity and cruelty, or without accepting Mr. Carlyle's dictum, that in the run of centuries right and might are identical, experience shows—

> That civilisation does git forrid
> Sometimes upon a powder cart.

But this admitted, it must also be admitted that our treatment of the native races makes a page of history over which most of us would gladly draw a sponge. The present generation, however, although it inherits the evils bequeathed from the past, is not responsible for them. Our procedure may not be faultless, but it is more humane than it once was. The exactions and oppressions of former times have ceased. If England seeks to enrich herself by conquest, she seeks also to dispense equivalent advantages. She may try to transform, but she does not forcibly denationalise the natives. She recognises the rights of the conquered as well as the duties of the conqueror. Her efforts to administer justice, foster commerce, secure order, and improve the means of transit, redeem some of her earlier harshness. Her career in India has been unique. It constitutes one of the most marvellous spectacles in history. There is not another instance on record where the victor has so vigilantly, sedulously, and disinterestedly exercised his authority for the benefit of the vanquished. The heterogeneous, divided, and defenceless, but industrious inhabitants were periodically plundered and enslaved by invaders, whose ferocity was only equalled by their greed. Their cry was blood and thunder. England's is commerce, not spoils. We have not always shown requisite respect for older but different forms of religion and civilisation in India. We have destroyed many bad things certainly, but some good things as well. The people may have grounds of complaint with different branches of our Administration. Our man-

existences only on sufferance. At the Congress of Vienna there were in Europe over fifty sovereign States—now there are not fifteen. Everything seems to indicate that we have entered upon an era when States will be bigger than they have been.

England must not only hold her own, but she must buttress her possessions, or she will be thrust from her position of a world to that of a European State. Englishmen may not have mastered the philosophy of Imperial expansion, but their instincts and impulses will prompt them to oppose a spiritless surrender of lands that have been watered by the blood of their best and bravest. They survey with vigilance, but without jealousy or displeasure, the colonising zeal of other powers. They have no desire to check it. Every new market creates benefits, and every old one ruined injures them. But such aggrandizements impose precautions. It is not a neighbourly act for a competing State to plant a settlement in inconvenient proximity to one of ours. It will generate disputes as to jurisdiction, and may become a source of rivalry and vexation. Nor is it tolerable to have adjacent islands seized, not for the purpose of trade, but as outlets for criminals. France cannot be a successful colonising power, and for this all-sufficient reason—she has no surplus population. Her peasantry, too, prefer their native fields to the parched plains of Senegal and the fever-stricken delta of the Red River. The Fatherland wants soldiers not colonies, was once the motto of Prince Bismarck. But, unable to arrest the exodus of his countrymen, he seeks to divert it, speciously suggesting that it is the consequence and token of German prosperity. More disinterested authorities say it is the consequence of the Conscription, of excessive taxation, and political repression. But the Greater Germany that her Chancellor dreams of will never be created if the

Draconian Code enforced at home is applied to it. Emigrants will prefer the free prairies of America to settlements in which the fermenting anarchy they have fled from is reproduced. If Germany does not bestow upon her over-sea possessions the right of self-government they will languish as the Dutch and the Portuguese do, or she will lose them as Spain has lost hers. We need not fear our rivals, nor rush into panics over their preternatural activity. Fear is a fertile source of evil and misfortune. Nations cannot be governed by any more insidious, injurious, or undignified influence. The clouds that have gathered so loweringly over us can be dispersed by a clear enunciation of our rights and a firm assertion of our determination to maintain them.

There are the seeds of a noble destiny in our dependencies. Neither of us can rudely sever the bonds of sentiment and confidence which centuries have entwined. We are a source of mutual strength, and by liberality and forbearance, by removing all alienating restraints and leading the colonists to feel that they are fellow-citizens in something more than name, this strength may be indefinitely increased. Distance was once a barrier to such a union, but it is so no longer. The world has become a great whispering gallery. Quebec is, for all practical purposes, as near to Liverpool now as Liverpool was to London when Wolfe stormed the heights of Abraham. Intercourse with India is more easy now than it was with the Highlands before the Pretender planted his standard on the braes of Braemar. Turgot's famous aphorism that colonies, like pears, fall when they ripen, is striking but defective. Distance seems to quicken colonial loyalty and attachment. The combination of a series of self-controlling cantons or principalities, once scouted as chimerical, experience has proved to be practicable. The United States, whose disruption has been so repeatedly and so

exultantly predicted, have survived a century, and they supply a felicitous example of federated expansion. Why cannot England and her congeries of commonwealths federate also for their separate advantage and corresponding security? They present a surface vulnerable at many points, but few empires combine in an equal degree the danger of being stricken with the power to strike. The public business of England is the private business of every Englishman, and surely no weightier business can enlist their study than the security and prosperity of their native land and her affiliated provinces. It is incomparably more important to them as citizens, and to England as a nation, than the recriminatory topics on which political partisans love to ring the political changes.

To illustrate how mighty conflicts arise from trivial things, Pascal maintained that if Cleopatra's nose had been a little longer, the world would have had a different destiny. This sweeping theory may not be correct, but it is undeniable that if a bucket of water had been shed at the right time upon the fire that was lighted in Egypt three years ago, the conflagration that has laid that unhappy country in ruins would never have broken out. The voice of faction should be hushed in the presence of calamity. But the same sentiment that forbids attempts to turn national disasters to party advantage, forbids also the use of mincing platitudes at such a juncture as the present. The undertaking the Government have in hand in Egypt is inherently arduous; but by alternate hesitation and recklessness they have precipitated a crisis at once grave and perplexing. We require to go back to the ill-fated Walcheren expedition to find in our annals a modern parallel for the nervelessness, dawdle, indecisions, perplexities, half-measures, delays, and perversities that have distinguished the action of the executive. The elementary facts of the situation have been distorted by long

drawn out debates. Let us look at them as they are, and not as they are coloured by partisans. What have we done in Egypt? We bombarded Alexandria and left it to burn. In less than three years we have equipped three expeditions—two under Lord Wolseley, and one under General Graham. We have had two abortive conferences—one at Constantinople and another at London, and measureless diplomacy. We have despatched three special missions—a diplomatic one under Admiral Hewitt to Abyssinia, an administrative one under Lord Dufferin, and a fiscal one under Lord Northbrook to Cairo. We allowed Hicks Pasha's army to be sent to the shambles. We could either have stopped it or strengthened it. We did neither. We sent General Gordon and Col. Stewart alone to bring away the Soudan garrisons—a piece of Quixotism worthy of mediæval knight-errantry. We are now lavishing blood and treasure to recover, if alive, the chivalrous rescuer whose forlorn and heroic struggle the world has followed with admiration. In all we have, directly or indirectly, slain over 20,000 persons, and expended over £20,000,000. What have we achieved by this costly and sanguinary intervention? We have struck the heaviest blow at British influence in the East that has been struck for a generation. We have made Egypt a weltering chaos. We banished Arabi, but we have reinvigorated the Mahdi. We have deranged everything, settled nothing, and have hopelessly compromised the fortunes and the future of every Egyptian. No body of men, either native or foreign, has as yet been benefited by our reforming schemes. We have given the world fresh lessons in massacre, the records of which are written in the charred remains of desolate cities and deserted villages, in the scattered skeletons of gallant Arabs, in the maimed and suffering occupants of many a desert tent, and in a demoralised executive and despairing people. What has caused

the usurers and the courbash of the task-master. Justice and national reputation demand this. It is the least atonement we can make for the miseries we have inflicted upon an unoffending and submissive race. But it will take time and require patience. You cannot arbitrarily engraft into the Egyptian mind English ideas of government, or evoke a sudden rise of order and freedom out of the residuum of centuries of serfdom. It will be years before the new institutions we have projected will have taken firm root. This can only be reared through the fostering tutelage of British supervision. If we leave, they will fade as flowers do without water. Moral support is essential but moral support without visible power behind it is useless in the East. It is unreasonable to expect an executive shattered by rebellion and conquest, a ruling class corrupt, arbitrary, and retrograde, and a population of hereditary bondsmen, to realise at once the responsibilities attaching to, and adapt themselves to, the working of free institutions. Even in settled and progressive countries this is the work of generations. A bureaucratic revolution amongst officials whose order of management has been the enaction of bribes and the infliction of the lash—an organic, fiscal, judicial, and legislative change—cannot be accomplished in a prescribed period, and with the veto of Europe hanging like the sword of Damocles over our operations.

Nubar Pasha says the Egyptian problem is summed up in one word—irrigation. The poorest and most patient peasantry in the world are ground down by a proportionately heavier taxation than is imposed upon any other known people. Their overmastering poverty prevents prosperity, produces discontent, and induces disorder. The wealth of Egypt lies in its mud. This fertilising agent requires capital to collect and utilise. Capital won't settle without security. Security is the the product of stable

government. The guarantee for such a government can, in present circumstances, be given only by England.

Popular interest is for the time concentrated in the Soudan. But when our task there is done, that in the Delta will be far from solution. There is a fear that the military may cause us to forget the economic and political crisis. While the country is pre-occupied, or ill-formed, the Government may, in their anxiety to clear themselves of present troubles, make arrangements that will contain the germs of future disasters. Before and beyond all things let us keep clear of entangling compacts with other Powers. If they only want to secure the money lent by their subjects, their demands may be met. We are expending, without a murmur, millions in the expedition of Khartoum—which, had we utilised the victories won near Suakim, would not have been needed, or if needed, and started six weeks sooner, would not have cost half as much as it will do—surely we need not be afraid to endorse a loan which, with effective administration, would in three years be self-sustaining. This will satisfy the Powers if they are only seeking, as they say they are, a bond for their clients. But if they mean political trouble for this country, it won't. Every Englishman would mourn if the rejection of the terms now under discussion was to disturb our friendly relations with France, and arouse latent animosities elsewhere. We desire to live in amity with all mankind, but more especially with a people bound to us by the ties of locality and association. We have a genuine admiration and regard for France. Recent years may have deprived her of the European initiative, but nothing can cancel her magnificent past. The bold defiance which, in the name of outraged justice, she flung at the coalesced kings, and the genius which carried her tricolour from Paris to the Pyramids, and from the Escurial to the Kremlin, will never cease to fascinate the

not be at the mercy of other and perhaps unfriendly Powers. To attain these ends Englishmen should close their ranks and uphold their executive. We can differ about our domestic matters as we like, but when external dangers threaten us, I know only one party—the nation.

It is a far cry from Egypt to Ireland, but it is not a jarring one, as there is much similarity in the mournful histories of the two countries. Our troubles in Egypt will, it is to be trusted, be transient, but in Ireland they are ubiquitous and abyssmal. Reference to Ireland is like throwing oil upon a blazing brazier—adding to the accumulated stores of reciprocal dissatisfaction. We despairingly try to thrust her out of sight, or to overlook her. But she will neither be forgotten nor ignored. She haunts us as Banquo's ghost did Macbeth. Official chroniclers parade, with a serenity that nothing ruffles, long arrays of figures to show that rents have been lowered and that evictions have been diminished, that crime has decreased, and exports increased. Very consoling information, no doubt, to every one but the landlords. These tables recall the anecdote of an Irish farmer who one day asked a Tory friend, "What does Dr. Cook Taylor do?" "He is a statistician to the Castle," was the reply. "And what is a statistician?" rejoined the querist. "A man who is paid for inventing facts for the use of the Whigs." The Castle Authorities may not, as this story insinuates, falsify their returns, but they either don't believe them or they don't draw from them the conclusions they are intended to convey. If the results revealed are so reassuring, how comes it they cling so convulsively to coercion as their only mode of rule? Is it from preference or from fear? If from preference they are despotic—if from fear they are dissembling. There is an invisible spirit in Irish politics that all our ameliorative legislation cannot allay. Irishmen are not attracted by the brusque, tenacious, but

somewhat ungenial order of mind that distinguishes our "bourgeois" law-givers. It has many merits, but it has certainly not governed Ireland wisely or well. It is adamantine rather than amiable, and sensitive, quickwitted Irishmen are repelled by it. The Rev. Sydney Smith once gave characteristic expression to the average middle-class conception of Irish requirements. He defined the object of the Government to be the securing for the people of roast pork, potatoes, claret, a stout constable, an honest justice, and a clear highway. "What's the use," he asks, "of bawling in the streets about the Green Isle, the Isle of the Ocean, the bold anthem of 'Erin go Bragh'? A far better anthem would be Erin go bread and cheese, Erin go cabins that would keep the rain out, Erin go pantaloons without holes in them." Ah! Mr. Smith, the sentiment that finds expression in the touching poem that you and men like you deride, has quickened the heart of many an exile of Erin and made it tremulous with patriotic emotion, amidst rags and penury. It was the same sentiment that prompted the Samians to offer their breasts as bulwarks when the Republic was in danger—that nerved the arm of the patriot Tell, and of the Bruce of Bannockburn. It is the sentiment which constitutes to-day a more effective defence of England than all her wealth and her ships, all her fortifications and her arsenals. It is the living fibre that dies last in every true man. It is because the inheritors of Mr. Smith's sensual philosophy conceive that all Irishmen want is only a well-filled trough, and a well-littered sty—it is because they don't appreciate the finer qualities that are deeply implanted in the Celtic nature, that their efforts after reconciliation have failed. Scarcity, wretchedness, huge, dank, and baleful, are perennial in Ireland, and the people want only too urgently all that this facetious but worldly-minded clergyman describes. But they want something different and more. Ev

nation has its ideal. Greece typified beauty; Rome force. The Saxon is practical; the Celt is imaginative. But the existence of these diversities need create no intestine antipathies and dissent. If a legitimate outlet is furnished for their manifestations, they will lend picturesqueness and strength to the greater nationality which should cover all.

We have tried in Ireland, with sad and dishonouring results, the hardest form of administration. Our method has been a word and a blow, the blow usually first. Suppose we try the softer forces of gentleness, generosity, and courtesy. This is not an original suggestion certainly. It is as old as Christianity. But amidst all our plans we have not attempted it yet in Ireland. Nations, like men, easily forgive injuries; but insult and distrust inflame their hatred and perpetuate their resentment. And what can be more insulting and distrustful than the systematic exclusion of all Irishmen from positions of trust and authority in their own country? They regard such exclusion as a badge of conquest, a stigma of degradation, and they wince under it and resent it. Would England not do the same? How long would they submit to be ostracised from the confidence, honours, and emoluments of their native land? Material advantages, by all means, and to any extent short of exciting corruption or inducing effeminacy, but if Ireland is ever to be won over to settled order and contentment, her affections must be captivated, and her honourable ambition to administer her own affairs gratified. This will not be done by the renewal of the state of siege—a national humiliation that the Cabinet seem to be contemplating. There are individuals, no doubt, who ask for separation, but the Irish people, as a body, seek self-government. They want the same local liberties we have conceded to the colonies, and which are riveting rather than disintegrating the empire.

Union between the two countries is essential to the welfare of both; but concord and amity are not incompatible with the repeal of the ill-starred Act of 1800. Home Rule might not work as well as its supporters expect; but it is humanly impossible for it to work worse than the covenant of evil memory which was carried by bribery, and has been upheld by unconstitutional force. No people once fairly invested with legal power has shown any disposition to abuse it, or to indulge in acts of reactionary vengeance. I do not believe the Irish will.

Away from Ireland, the Government have displayed in domestic politics a grasp and sagacity that is absent from their treatment of colonial and foreign questions. The reason for this is not far to seek. Abroad, they are guided by a tortuous and mutable policy, and indecision is inevitable. At home, they regulate their action by settled principle, and vacillation is difficult. They know what they want to do, and they do it. In the matter of reform, they have done it well. Half a century ago, England had representative institutions, but not popular representation. Property was represented, but not persons. An organic change was then effected by what the Duke of Wellington described as a revolution in the due course of law. The Act of 1867 continued, and that of 1884 completed, the alteration initiated in 1832. The resistance to the supplemental stages was insignificant when compared to that given to the first. To the last it was narrowed to points of procedure and detail. But out of these materials for a constitutional collision would easily have been found. Through the combined wisdom and forbearance of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Salisbury this was averted. It is unnecessary, and it would be ungracious, to attempt to fix their respective shares of merit in these negotiations. The country is grateful for what they did—and their followers can amuse themselves in clamouring for the honours of

victory. The bargain, it is said, did violence to Parliamentary wont and use. Perhaps. But there are usages more honoured in the breach than the observance. Any arrangement that weakens party trammels is praiseworthy, and that this one did so, even temporarily, is not one of its least claims to commendation. There are other questions on which both sides are agreed in principle whose settlement might be advanced by friendly conferences. Is there any reason against trying them? It would be surrendering the rights of discussion, asseverate some. I do not think so. Parliament would have the same liberty of debate after as before such a transaction. While as for voting, have not the rank and file already relinquished their freedom? There are some parents who, anxious to please their children, but disliking a noise, buy them a drum, on condition that they do not beat it. The liberty of a party man in Parliament is similarly restrained. He has the right to vote independently, but if he exercises it, he will be chastised.

The Government scheme of reform is not ideally perfect, but it does intentional injustice to no class, and it will work without perceptible friction. Possibly this is as much as could have been said of any bill dealing with so complicated a subject. The sovereignty of the people is not necessarily realised by the government of the greatest numbers. "The people" is the entire body of inhabitants. The widest suffrage will only give us the government of one section by another which presumably will be, but which in fact may not be, the majority. The legitimacy of the power of the majority rests on the assumption that it is right and will be just. But no majority is infallible, and all are at times tyrannical. Any person who devises machinery that will protect the minority against the arbitrariness of the majority, and will guarantee the majority against its own errors, will be counted

a benefactor of his species. The Ministerial contribution to this problem is the creation of single-membered seats. Their method may not altogether meet the difficulty, yet it is better than voting by list. But it ought to be applied uniformly. Why should thirty-six boroughs be exempted from its operation? The electors in these places will be favoured with double votes, and the candidates will be penalised by double expenditure. What have these voters done to be so privileged, and their members to be so punished? Splitting the constituencies will, in my judgment, tend to lessen, not to augment, party manipulation or dictation. And it is yet to be proved that by it vestrymen will be more readily returned than they are now by caucus-ridden constituencies. But if they are, where's the mischief? Vestrymen surely are better than professional politicians who often pretend the public good to serve their own. The resident member will be racy of the soil. He will know the life of the place he sits for. He may have its prejudices, but he will also have its principles, and his municipal knowledge will enable him to contribute to the many vestry-like discussions that take place in the House of Commons, with appropriate flavour, bias, and direction. His failing will be imperfect knowledge of Imperial subjects, and a craving after social recognition which may enthral him. But the carpet-bagger will be equally amenable to such blandishments—while in his anxiety for notoriety or place, he will efface his principles and sacrifice his constituents. Love of locality generates love of country, and is the ground-work of national sentiment. If a man is destitute of localism, his patriotism will be limp and lukewarm. We had better have stolid, uncultured, honest burgesses, who will have the courage to blurt out unpalatable truths, than plausible adventurers who sail into Parliament by dexterously adjusting their principles to the caprice of the hour, and tickling the ears of the voters with alluring claptrap.

Those who enjoy the advantage of political detachment can survey with composure the pending competition for the franchises of the new electors. It is a case of Codling versus Short. Like Hadji Baba, the rivals are trying how they can best turn the change to their own advantage. One set of suitors attempt to dazzle their clientals with vague schemes of sophisticated socialism—and the other admonish them that despotism and democracy are convertible terms and that both are inimical to liberty. To those who have never been to sea a squall seems a hurricane—and to the timid, unventuresome Englishman, whose knowledge of politics is more superficial than his knowledge of trade, the propagation of theories that may weaken the rights of property are disquieting. But they need not be so. Their discussion is as old as Plato, and no nearer realisation now than they were when the Athenian sage discoursed to admiring throngs in the olive groves of Academus. There is no fear of anarchy amongst a people possessed almost to a man of a passion for accumulation. If property is robbery, we have in England twenty odd million thieves—who will not readily refund. But to endow most amply with political power persons most poorly endowed with political knowledge, experience, and discipline, is suicidal, exclaim hypochondriacs. To have a Parliament the express image of the people's will, unless the people be wise, gives us no satisfaction, add sympathisers in chorus. And they both gloomily predict that as the Roman plebeians sold themselves to demagogues, and their liberties to dictators, so the unreflecting English labourers will sell their suffrages, and surrender their consciences, to scheming and seductive suppliants. Nonsense! There is no warrant for such dyspeptic croaking. The men who thus discourse are either oppressed wit political night-mare—or they have only seen their countr ien through a study window. There is noth

gruous in the union of democratic doctrines with representative institutions. Ancient order and modern progress are not incompatible. Englishmen possess intuitively a temper of independence and a habit of self-restraint which will make them proof against both anarchy and autocracy, and will enable them to adjust themselves to transformations rendered indispensable by the invincible march of time and events.

Our Cassandras smile incredulously when we discourse in this optimistic vein, and ask us to set our pæans to a lower key. But do not the facts justify us? Our workmen are neither barbarians nor incendiaries. They are Englishmen first and operatives afterwards. They are always practical—sometimes provokingly prosaic, and they are instinctively Conservative. In both these qualities and defects they only mirror the nation. It would improve us all if we had a little more poetry in our natures, and if we were not so wholly engulphed in the struggle for gain. We should be better, too, for a dash of Gallic logic and lucidity. The first effort of a reformer is usually to prevent further reformation. Having got what he wants, he is satisfied, and thinks others should be so also. Working men are more likely to resist change, or to be careless about it, than to espouse revolutionary ideas. Their modes of thought and habits of life have a tendency to become stereotyped. How tenaciously they cling to old ways, old tools, old methods of working! How stoutly they stand up for the privileges of property in their class societies! In sentiment there is not a more sincere and consistent Conservative than a co-operative—trades-union—teetotaller. If you doubt it, run athwart his cherished routine, and your incredulity will soon vanish. Shrewd, steady, plodding, you get in him the honourable union of intelligence and self-respect, with hard work. His mental vision may not be many sided, but just as a horse with

blinkers best picks his path and does not shy, so such a man walks straight and sees clearly. He is not, probably never will, become a Conservative, in a party sense, but the conception that underlies and controls his conduct is emphatically anti-anarchical. The urban householders have had votes for twenty years, but they have shown no disposition to use them in a sectional sense. They could have sent members of their own rank to Parliament, but they preferred capitalists and aspiring placemen—the two orders of men especially objectionable to genuine Jacobins. Their spokesmen are more Ministerial than Ministers, as they presume to defend proceedings that men in authority boggle at.

Those who uneasily ask themselves whether we are about to witness an absolute, unbalanced, and permanent displacement of legislative authority, may console themselves by recalling the suggestive experiences of 1841 and 1874. Probably there never was a more unpopular Ministry than the Duke of Wellington's. It was not merely disliked, it was execrated. But three years after its adherents had been hooted from every hustings in the land, they found themselves nearly strong enough to displace Lord Grey, and after the dissolution they resumed office in front of a formidable majority. Notwithstanding the great achievements of the Liberals in the Parliament of 1868, they were rudely displaced at the ensuing election. Public opinion is as shifty as the wind, and we will witness as great fluctuations in the future as in the past. For centuries industrial combinations were tabooed. Unions were illegal, and unionists were outlawed. This induced unending recriminations and reprisals. The interdictions were removed, and the once dreaded organisations became forthwith models of social decorum and political propriety. May we not experience a like result from the removal of the electoral ban under

which the proletariat has lived? May not the very evils anticipated from their enfranchisement be averted by it? Experience seems to justify that conclusion. Human nature s the same in the factory as behind the counter, and you cannot alter it by Act of Parliament. There is no more reason to suppose that wage-earners will hold homogeneous political opinions than the tradesmen will do so. Artisans and labourers have combined to secure the suffrage, as they all felt the exclusion; but that having been got the social distinctions between skilled and unskilled workmen, and the mental differences between man and man, will display themselves, and prevent the creation of an exclusively class opinion apart from, or hostile to, the rest of the community. Men are naturally conventional. Their notions are regulated by those generally prevalent. There may be a few who refuse to bend the knee to Baal and who think and act for themselves. But they are a small minority. The majority glide along in peaceful mediocrity, adopting without difficulty the preponderating views, and just holding themselves on an easy level with their generation. This is the course with every order of men—workers as well as idlers. All available information goes to show that the rural voters will be as unaggressive as the urban ones have been. Their principles may be Liberal, but their instincts are Conservative.

Previous Reform Bills gave a healthy impetus to the legislative machine. This one is likely to do so also, but no measures that may be adopted will subvert the Constitution. In a despotism there is no remedy for injustice but force. But the elasticity of our institutions enables them to be adapted to the development of every kind of progress without civil convulsion. The expected legislation, therefore, will be in consonance with the traditions of the country and the requirements of a highly organised and expanding society.

ness, and happiness will follow as certainly as night the day. Man owes his growth to his conflict with difficulty. It is not what he has, but what he is, which constitutes his glory and his bliss. There is nothing so noble as courage and disinterestedness, and nothing so strong as the unconquerable purpose of duty. Different forms of Government tend to instil into their citizens different sentiments, and it is argued by opponents that the cardinal principle of democracy—the right of every individual to act according to his will—is incompatible with the collective service of the country, and is the genesis of egotism and exclusiveness. But history does not support this contention. It shows that democracy induces a feeling of amity and fraternity amongst citizens, and disposes them to voluntary labour for the common weal such as no coercion can call forth. When men are taken into partnership in the State, they become guardians of its peace and promoters of its prosperity. The temper that is kindled by thoughts of independence and national honour leads them to repudiate the time-serving formula, "Where I am well off, there is my country." Our country is not a mere zone of territory, and it cannot be cast off as we cast off an old shoe. The ancient democracies were alternately lavish and parsimonious. They rapidly passed from foolish admiration to ingratitude towards their leaders, but on supreme occasions they impassioned their people with a love stronger than death. In moments of civic agony and military dejection, the Athenians could be roused to generous and exalted sacrifices. When despotism's banded myriads threatened their matchless city, the sacred associations of home and fatherland thrilled their souls and stirred them to heroic devotion. England is as rich in blessin[illegible] Athens was, and her liberty is more compre[illegible]as been won by the toils and sanctifie[illegible]tions of

patriots. It has dowered her with beneficent activity and an enduring felicity. If it should be imperilled, neutrality would be treason. Democracy will best supply the stimulus and implant the elasticity requisite for its defence. I am for a robust, high-spirited, magnanimous democracy—the democracy of Pericles, not of Cleon—a democracy that will unfold the nation's worthier nature and protect the highest properties of honesty and truth, that will dissipate the moral inertness that at times grows parasitically over England's energies and cramps her pristine vigour.

men had had differences with the Colonial Government which led to a separation. He would have the House to regard them as a sort of modern Pilgrim Fathers, who had shaken the monarchical dust off their feet, and penetrated into unknown and dangerous regions with a view to build up a state clear of the tyranny of Great Britain. This is simply romance. The Boers left Cape Colony, not because they were persecuted, but because the English Government refused to allow them to persecute the natives. They emigrated, not in consequence of being denied all legitimate freedom, but because this country would not allow them to deprive the coloured men of like privileges. The difference between the Colonists and the Dutchmen, which the member for Liskeard so mildly described as referring to a different mode of treating the coloured races, when resolved into plain language is no other than this—England practised an anti-slavery policy, and the Boers the most brutal and barbarous system of enforced labour. When the negroes of the West Indies were emancipated, the provisions of that measure were extended to the colonies at the Cape of Good Hope, and the Dutchmen never willingly acquiesced in the beneficent edict of the British Crown. I have no wish to revive old and unpleasant disputes, but I am stating what is literally the fact when I say that the coloured populations of the world have never been treated with greater harshness by white men than the unfortunate Bushmen of South Africa have been treated by the Dutch settlers.

Now as to their Republicanism, mentioned by the member for Dungarvon, I would certainly not utter one syllable of disparagement of that honoured word. Not only the form but the name of Republic has an attraction and a striking fascination for my mind. But a Republic respects the rights of all. The Republicanism of the Transvaal is nominal, its despotism is real, and its

despots are a multitude. What they want is not freedom from British control, but they desire to exercise "the Right Divine for governing wrong." The constitution of the State was not settled until 1858. It was never a thriving Government, for no body could prosper that had at its root the canker of slavery. But it rubbed along with fair success for a few years. About 1866-7 deposits of diamonds and gold were found in the valley of the Orange River and in various other districts in that part of Africa. The announcement of these discoveries brought a rush of adventurers from all parts of the world to the spot. These men came, not with a view of following the occupation of colonists, but for the purpose of digging diamonds, or gathering gold as rapidly as possible, and having accumulated wealth, their design in most cases was to leave the country. They were not, however, specially successful in their enterprise, and the indiscriminate crowd, who had thus been collected, associated themselves with the Boers in the Transvaal. They commenced a series of raids upon unoffending natives. They went to the settlements of peaceful Kaffirs, drove off their cattle, carried away the produce of the lands, slew the male members, took the children into what they mildly called apprenticeship, but which was really slavery, and carried the women into a condition that was worse than slavery. These nefarious proceedings in time produced an inevitable revulsion of feeling, and led to combined resistance on the part of the natives. War was declared by the larger tribes against the Transvaal Government. In that war the Boers were beaten—disgracefully beaten. They did not display their traditional courage or pertinacity. An unsuccessful war produces a depressing influence on the best ordered community; but its effect upon a young, struggling, and ricketty state like the Transvaal was simply disastrous. The people re-

fused to acknowledge the authority of President Burgers and his colleagues. They refused to pay the taxes in many cases. They gave subsidies to native chiefs to purchase immunity from attack. Villages were deserted and homesteads were destroyed. The whole country was in a state of disorganisation, and the people in a state of demoralisation. The President had not funds to meet the expenses of the postal service—one of the first payments a state is called upon to discharge. When an order was made upon President Burgers for £1,000, he declared he had not a single shilling in the Treasury wherewith to meet it. It would be difficult to conceive even a newly-formed state in a more depressed and dispirited condition than that in which the men of the Transvaal found themselves.

I do not contend that their weakness is a justification for England to interfere. If the British Government had to assume the direction of every weak state on its borders, our dominions would soon be nearly co-extensive with the human race. Even the existence of slavery is not a sufficient reason for their intercession. The cause of their action is not the feebleness of the Transvaal Government, but the fact that this feebleness endangers the position of the Cape Colonies, and the safety of our fellow citizens in that part of the world. Let us look at the facts. The Transvaal territory is larger in extent than Italy—nearly as large as France. It has a frontier line of more than 1,600 miles. No fewer than 1,200 out of this number abut on the possessions of the hostile races. Only 400 adjoin friendly states. There are upwards of a million coloured people in the territory, and alongside of them there are 40,000 whites. Calculating one male adult to every five of the population, we have only some 8,000 men in the Transvaal. About 1,000 of these are engaged in trading operations and live in villages. 400

or 500 of them are miners, and it thus leaves little more than 6,400 or 6,500 men to whom the defences of the State could be entrusted. Supposing every one of these 6,000 Boers were willing and able to take up arms they would be called upon to hold a line three times as long as between Kent and Caithness. The House would see that to expect them to do this was to expect them to do an impossibility.

The Kaffirs are one of the most warlike and resolute of all the aboriginal races with whom Europeans have come in contact in the work of colonisation. From 1818-19 to 1853-4 this country was constantly at war with them in South Africa. They were no mean adversaries then, although they were little more than an organised mob. Their weapons consisted for the most part of bows and arrows, spears and clubs. Even thus inadequately accoutred they were able to hold their own against English soldiers for the better part of forty years. Since then a great change has taken place. The Kaffirs have become possessed of modern weapons of warfare. The men have been regularly drilled to military service. One chief, not a very important one, close to the Transvaal, has at his disposal an army of 10,000 properly trained and equipped soldiers, another and more powerful chief is able to take into the field fully 40,000 men equally well accoutred for battle. As illustrating the spirit that animates some of these warlike natives, I may cite the declaration of Cetywayo, the king of the Zulus. When this Kaffir recently had an interview with the commissioner from Natal, he told him he had no ill-feeling towards the English. He respected their authority, and wished to live on friendly terms with them. On the other hand he had cause of quarrel with the President of the Transvaal and with some of the tribes who lived within the territory. He declared, too, that fighting was his voca-

tion, that it was a tradition of his tribe to kill men; that his father and grandfather had been accustomed to do this slicing, and that he did not mean to abandon their time-honoured practices. He reminded the commissioner, also, that he had recently become ruler, and that it was desirable for him to prove his capacity to his followers by showing them his prowess in battle. He further declared that the young men of his tribe were desirous of having an opportunity of washing their spears. For these reasons, therefore, Cetywayo was meditating war on the people of the Transvaal, both Boers and natives. This man is a simple savage. He said straight out what he meant. If he had been a European and Christian Emperor, he would have prefaced his intention of declaring war by issuing a proclamation abounding in fine sentences and philanthropic phrases. He would have called God and man to witness that he had been driven into war against his inclination for the purposes of freeing the bodies of his neighbours from physical thraldom, and their minds from degrading superstition. Not having learned the arts of modern Christian diplomacy, Cetywayo had the candour to declare that he meant to commence war for the simple purpose of showing his capacity as a chief for killing his enemy, and giving his braves an opportunity of washing their spears in the blood of hostile tribes. These chiefs and others, he repeated, were not at the time hostile to England, but no one could foretell if they once went upon the war-track and put on their battle-paint, where they would stop. Their first attack would be on the Transvaal, but their blood being stirred and their passions excited, they would require little inducement to carry their hostilities into the English colonies. A war of this kind, once begun, would spread desolation, destruction, and death from the confines of the Cape Colonies to the boundaries of the sandy desert.

In dealing with the coloured tribes, loss of prestige was not only loss of power, but loss of security. The Government of the Transvaal being unable to resist the advance of their warlike neighbours, having had serious quarrels with them, it is the duty of the English Government to use their authority, with a view to prevent the breaking out of such a disastrous conflict as I have foreshadowed. This is the justification, and to me a sufficient one, for the action that has been taken by Sir Theophilus Shepstone. The hon. gentleman who preceded me described it as a war of aggression. I demur to such a description. There has been no war and no aggression. England has no earth-hunger, no longing for more land. She has territory in abundance and to spare. She will never repeat a series of deeds as dark and doubtful as those which characterised her conquest of India. She will never follow the bad example set by Spaniards in South America, and the Russians in Central Asia. If I know the wishes of my countrymen I do not think they will spend a shilling or discharge a musket for the simple purpose of adding to the boundaries of their dominions. They will defend the existence of their present possessions if assailed, but extension of territory will be got only as a consequence of the peaceful pursuits of commerce and civilization.

I object to the phrase applied by the member for Liskeard when he said that the Transvaal had been annexed. The word " annexed " presupposes the exercise of physical force, and on that ground its use in this instance is incorrect. Germany annexed Alsace, Russia annexed Poland, but Italy incorporated Rome. Between the words " incorporation " and " annexation " there is to my mind a wide difference. Incorporation is union by mutual consent, and that I hold is the proper description of our recent action in South Africa. Anyone who has read the Blue Books must admit the correctness of my statement. The

Commissioner's visit to the Transvaal was known beforehand, and he was met on the borders by the carriage of the President of the Republic. He was welcomed as a friend, not as an enemy. A striking incident occurred as he was crossing the frontier, and it might be stated as a curious illustration of the feeling of the natives towards England. The Dutch farmers received the English Commissioner by discharging a volley of firearms in his honour, and some of the Kaffirs who saw this proceeding thought it was an attempt to shoot Sir Theophilus Shepstone. They conveyed the news to Cetywayo, and he sent word to the Governor of Natal that if such had been the case he would have punished the Transvaal people for their attempt to kill the representative of his friends the English.

President Burgers and Sir Theophilus Shepstone discussed the conditions of the Confederation, not as opponents—certainly not as enemies—but more like the managers of two competing lines of railway considering the terms of amalgamation. When the proclamation was issued, there was not a hand or voice raised against it in the market place of Pretoria. The President desired the State Treasurer to hand over the keys of the Government House and the Treasury to the English Commissioner, and he in his turn handed them back to the Treasurer. Every official of the Republic was reinstated in his office; not a single change was made in the law or mode of government of the State; all the regulations, customs, and staff of officers were retained. The only difference was that by the fact of the Transvaal passing into British possession the accursed system of slavery became destroyed. The only change made was that the protecting ægis of the British name and authority was thrown over the territory. The whole work was accomplished by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, with the assistance of six or seven attendants and

twenty-five mounted policemen. The Boers will be compelled to abandon their man-stealing practices; but in consideration for any benefit, if it was ever a benefit, that came to them from obtaining forced labour from the poor natives, they will enjoy in return a more settled and stable rule. The natives in the State will have their liberties assured, and will be relieved from the incursions of filibusterers. The natives outside the boundaries, on the other hand, will not be compelled to engage in warfare, knowing the power and capacity of England, while the colonies at the Cape would, by its union, be free from the uncertainty and discomforts of pending hostilities. I do not know, in the history of colonisation, any extension of territory that has ever been made with purer motives, less opposition, or more calculated to benefit all parties concerned. Both inside and outside the borders of the Transvaal the inhabitants will be served by it.

The member for Liskeard admits the soundness of the principle of confederation. Indeed there is no difference of opinion on the question in the House or amongst politicians generally. Everyone who has thought on the subject admits that it is desirable to unite a series of colonies such as those that exist in South Africa; the only difference arises as to the time, the circumstances and the character of the union that is to be effected. I will not, therefore, discuss the principle of confederation, as I suppose it is admitted by all, but I contend that if there is another argument required for the South African Confederation it is supplied by the recent proceedings in the Transvaal. In dealing with the natives there are three things required. They should be treated with justice, firmness, and uniformity. The two first conditions have been for years supplied in South Africa. The natives have been treated both justly and firmly by the English Govern-

ment, and hence their continued period of peace and prosperity—but there has not been a uniform mode of dealing with them. One state gives them greater privileges than another, and some of the native chiefs have confused the Dutch Republic with the English Colonies, and have attempted to make the latter suffer for the former. If the principle of confederation were practically established there would be a uniform and unbroken course of treatment observed to the whole of the Kaffir tribes, and that, combined with the advantage of British Rule, would contribute to the peace of the territories, and the welfare of the Colonies. A remarkable fact, and one highly creditable to the English rule, I may state. It has been usual when the white race has come in collision with the coloured races that the dark man has first retreated, and then disappeared. This has been the case in New Zealand, in Australia, and America. At the Cape, however, the result has been the very opposite. There, notwithstanding the British Rule, the native races have gradually increased in numbers, and several of them—the Fingo tribe for example—have become perfectly acclimatised to the British mode of living. They have become farmers and prosperous traders, have amassed wealth, and are regularly civilised citizens. This encouraging state of affairs ought always to be borne in mind when we are considering the condition of the English Colonies.

The member for Liskeard institutes a comparison between the principle of confederation in North America and that in South Africa. He approves of the project in one place, and does not approve of it in the other. I cannot follow my hon. friend in his argument. If there is any difference, I think the principle of confederation is more applicable to Africa than it is to America. The member for Liskeard says there are differences amongst the Colonies in Africa that render union not possible at

the present time; but I beg to remind him that if the African Colonies are of Dutch origin, the American Colonies are of French origin. We have in Lower Canada still a distinctly French population. That part of the country is really a piece of old France. It is France before the revolution, minus the government and the aristocracy. The people have all the thrift and industry, the want of enterprise, the moderate competency and fair share of attainments that characterised the ordinary French peasantry 150 or 200 years ago. They have made little progress and retained all their old modes of life. They are really colonial "Rip Van Winkles." In Upper Canada on the other hand we have aggressive and pugnacious Presbyterians from Scotland, and Orangemen from the North of Ireland. It is impossible therefore to conceive a greater contrast than between the inhabitants of these two colonies. There is much greater diversity of character existing between them than there is in any section of the people in South Africa. Again a confederation is of more value for regulating external politics than the internal government. Now, in Canada they have no external questions to disturb them. The Indians are harmless. There was a time when union with the American Republic was supported by a large party in the United States. But that has passed. The slave holders sought to extend their dominions towards the South, because every additional state in that direction gave them increased legislative and executive authority. With a view to balance this extension the abolitionist favoured a union with Canada. All this, however, is now past. Slavery being destroyed there is no necessity on their part to seek to add to their territory. The United States might without much trouble have incorporated San Domingo, Cuba, and part of Mexico. They have not done so simply because they have no desire and the parties without the union

have no motive for adding state to state as they had previous to the abolition of slavery. There is consequently no external question likely to be served by confederation in Canada. It is exactly the opposite in South Africa. There the external is the most important in dealing with the natives, and, as I have striven to show, confederation would certainly help them to solve the difficulty by establishing a uniform mode of acting towards the Kaffir tribes.

Another objection to the Bill is that it is permissive. I confess that that to me is its greatest merit. I do not approve of permissive legislation on all subjects, but if there is a question that could be dealt with by a permissive bill, it is surely this one. Confederation to be successful must be spontaneous and voluntary. It must spring from the parties to be directly affected by it. If it is forced upon them by any outside influence, instead of producing union it is calculated to produce antagonism. The Bill gives the South African Colonies the power to unite or not to unite as they desire. All it does is to lay down the framework of confederation, the details to be filled in by the Colonists themselves. The wisdom of union is admitted. Parliament draw a measure containing the basis of a scheme, they send that to South Africa—the details to be filled in by the Colonists themselves—and all they ask is that the States themselves should, if they approve, complete its clauses to their own liking. If they do not approve of the Bill it remains a dead letter. The member for Liskeard objects to the power that is given to the Queen in Council. That is merely a phrase. For my part I have no wish whatever to increase the power of the Executive. I am disposed to limit their authority, and increase that of the people's representatives. There does not occur to me anything in that section of the Bill to warrant the condemnation that my hon. friend has so oracularly uttered against it. What I understand from the measure and the correspondence

that preceded its drafting is that the Colonies themselves should adjust all their difficulties, and having done that voluntarily and freely the Home Government would be empowered to give it the force and law. There are necessarily a great many points upon which the Home Government could not form as sound a judgment as the Colonial. For example, in Natal there are only 18,000 white people and about 30,000 coloured living in an area of about 20,000 square miles. In Cape Colony, on the other hand, there are 275,000 whites and 450,000 blacks, and they cover an area of 200,000 square miles. It is manifest that some difficulty will arise in adjusting the relative representatives that should be accorded to the white and to the coloured people in these two colonies. That is a point that is relegated by the Bill to the Colonial Legislature, and having themselves agreed upon it, all the Home Government is required to do is to put the impress of their authority upon the conclusions that the South Africans arrive at. If the Bill had been compulsory, instead of permissive—if it had been forced upon the Colonies instead of being voluntarily offered for their acceptance, I should have opposed it; but the very principle of voluntaryism that is the basis of the measure is to my mind the best reason for its adoption.

XIV.—BRITISH EMPIRE, FEDERATION, AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Speech delivered during the General Election, in the Henry Street Schoolroom, Shieldfield, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, November 18th, 1885.

The permanent importance of the external business of the British Empire is demonstrated by our having three great officers of State—the Ministers for India, the Colonies, and Foreign Affairs—charged with its administration. Upon the wisdom, moderation, and manliness of its management; upon the delicate but vital shading which is constantly given to, or is withdrawn from, diplomatic doings and correspondence, depend vast issues. A blunder at home may be repaired with no further inconvenience than a display of party acerbity, or the delay of some needed reform; but a blunder abroad may inflict colossal injuries, paralyse industry, convulse trade, plunge the population into penury, and the country into disgrace. Foreign policy may be made an instrument for securing great national advantage and renown, or an instrument for entailing great national injury and degradation. It is the pivot on which the national mechanism revolves. When it is loose, the empire oscillates, and society is shaken. The slightest vibration is felt alike by the fireside of the humblest and in the palaces of the powerful. Yet, the public interest in this department of state is fitful and fluctuating. It is not sustained by serious attempts to trace events to their origin, or steadied by dispassionate

discussion. Amongst the numerous, but not very enlightened, section of the population who regard the Empire as an objectionable excrescence—something between a hindrance and a help—a paltry parish squabble, or an insignificant project of domestic improvement, is held of infinitely more importance than the efficiency of our national defences, or the safety of India. Such persons do not comprehend, when a province is closed to our merchants, that manufacture is stopped somewhere; that money circulates so much less freely; that the wages fund is so much reduced; and that the loss falls, ultimately, not less upon the artisan at the lathe, and the rustic at the plough, than upon the capitalist in his counting house. But indifference is only one evil. Nor is it the worst. Foreign affairs are permitted for years to drift on uncontrolled and unnoticed. Suddenly, a conjuncture occurs which the party managers conceive they can turn to their advantage. Thereupon, the party bellows is blown, and a fire is kindled which scorches all who endeavour to keep it within the furnace. National welfare is subordinated to the shifting and conflicting interests of heated rivals. Grave and delicate deliberations are made dependent upon the caprice of ill-instructed controversialists, and the government of the Empire is left as the prize of a scramble amongst a crowd of eager, contentious, and scheming partisans.

Can we call a truce to election clamour and recrimination, and bestow unexcited and sober consideration upon a subject in which we are all so deeply affected? We will look at it as Englishmen, and forget, for an hour, the personal bearings of the pending contest. We are seeking identical ends. We want to consolidate the power, and uphold the honour of our country. We desire power, not for the display of imperial arrogance or exclusiveness; but for the maintenance of international rights and the ful-

filment of international duties. The sentiment of empire is innate in Britons; and we are under obligations to see that it is not played upon for unworthy purposes.

Now, what is the British Empire? The words are often used, but not so often understood. There is a tale told of an English statesman who, when unexpectedly called to the presidency of the Colonial Department, asked his secretary to get a map of the world into his room, as he wanted to see where the places were situated that he had to rule. A decent gazetteer would also, he thought, be serviceable. I do not vouch for the truth of the story. It is probably told to give point to the popular want of knowledge as to our colonial possessions. Be that as it may, I have acted on the suggestion of the unknown Secretary of State. Here's such a map as he desiderated, and, for the nonce, I will act as the gazetteer. The British dominions embrace one-seventh of the land surface of the globe, and nearly one-fourth of its population. They cover 3½ millions of square miles in America; over a quarter of a million in Africa; over a million and a half in Asia; and three millions in Australia. The total area is 8,600,000 square miles, or 65 times the extent of the United Kingdom. That is, for every square mile of land we have at home, we have 65 square miles across the seas. The population is estimated at over 310,000,000, and includes men of all colours—white, black, red, and yellow—and all creeds. The Queen rules over nearly one-third more Mussulmans than the Sultan does; she has over one-third more Mahometan than Christian subjects; and as many believers in Brahma as in Mahomet and Christ put together. There is not now, and there never has been, an empire which has equalled it in extent and population, in industrial enterprise and wealth since the world began. There has never been one that approximated to it in self-government. It is that faculty and habit of independence,

which has been spun into the staple of our being, that has given such boundless vitality to the English race, and conferred upon them the uttermost parts of the earth as an inheritance. Wherever the tracery of England's widely-spread web extends, her responsibility is carried. She is here a citadel, encircled by an admirable line of defence—the ocean. She has not only to mount guard upon it, and all its outworks and dependencies, but she has long and intricate lines of communication to keep open and intact. This involves exceptional responsibilities, and necessitates wariness, energy, and spirit. There are broad distinctions between the British and other empires—ancient and modern. It is more scattered. It has not four, but four thousand frontiers, touching, at one or more points, nearly every civilized state, and innumerable savage tribes. Such expanded and undulating borders, and such varied and uncertain neighbours, involve us in constantly recurring conflicts, which make less figure in our annals than they do in our estimates. Physically Great Britain is an island; but strategically, she is a great Continental Power. Other great states are more homogeneous and their frontiers less exposed. This is true of Russia, China, and the United States; and still more so of Germany, France, and Austria. The British Empire combines the trading, colonizing, and military characteristics of the Phœnicians, the Greeks, and the Romans. Its citizens have carried into their struggles with the untried and the unknown, in their distant dependencies, the national gifts and political virtues acquired by a long practice of liberty.

To keep free and safe our ocean intercourse, on which the Empire depends for its existence, we require to plant numerous arsenals, garrisons, and coaling stations, along the routes into which trade has settled. There are five such main lines, intersected with naval and military stations. The first, the oldest, and the shortest, but not the

the Pacific—possibly at Levuka in the island of Ovaalu. At present, the most important of these highways are those by Suez and the Cape. They lead not only to India and China, but to our Straits Settlements and Australia; and no money is wasted in providing for their security. Whether, and how far, they may be influenced by the construction of the canal across the Isthmus of Panama, which is to be completed in three years' time, is a question on which authorities differ. But though it may divide the current of trade, and revive our rather languishing dependencies in the West Indies, it is scarcely likely to work such a revolution in the means of transit as the Suez Canal did. By a map, any speaker may make his meaning clearer than he can do by a speech. Doubting my capacity of exposition, and wishing you to grasp at once the scope of my contention, I have presumed to illustrate it by having this chart prepared, and by circulating "facsimiles" among those interested in the subject. They give a ready idea of the vastness and variety of the British Empire. It is a noble inheritance; and every Briton should be proud of it.

There is a tale told of some Americans who, when celebrating a victory of the Federal arms by a banquet, had proposed to them by the chairman as a toast—"The United States, bounded on the north by British America; on the south by the Gulf of Mexico; on the east by the Atlantic; and on the west by the Pacific Ocean." One of the guests thought this far too limited, and gave as an amendment—"The United States, bounded on the north and south by the two poles; on the east by the rising, and on the west by the setting sun." Even this capacious sentiment would not satisfy all, and a more ambitious member of the party proposed—"The United States, bounded on the north by the Aurora Borealis; on the south by the ·ocession of the equinoxes; on the east by the primeval

chaos; and on the west by the Day of Judgment." There are Englishmen with high aspirations; but this Yankee sky-scraper outstrips them, although the expansive British Empire bears a closer resemblance to his ideal than the magnificent, but compact territory over which the stars and stripes float in such honoured and uncontested supremacy.

Our vast dominions have been acquired by conquest, cession, and colonization. Six million square miles came to us by settlement, and two by war. The whole is the accumulation of not more than two centuries and a half. "Nothing great hath great beginnings." The acquisition of none of this territory dates back beyond 1600. In that year, we had not a solitary colony. The same reign that gave England Shakespeare's poetry, and Bacon's philosophy, gave her the supremacy of the seas, the nucleus of her empire, and pre-figured her subsequent splendour. It was then that the European States mingled fighting for religion and prestige with fighting for trade. It was then the two new worlds were opened up to European industry; the Indian Company's Charter was granted; and the first English settlement across the Atlantic was planted. Our enterprise in the East began in commerce, and ended in an empire which holds in its hands the welfare of millions; while out of that in the West has been evolved a marvellous aggregate of personal enterprise and political courage —the fruition of the struggle for liberty which commenced on the plains of Runnymede, and was crowned at the Appomattox Court House. It took well nigh a thousand years to build up the Roman Empire. In a fourth of that time, "England," to use the words of Mr. Webster, "has dotted over the surface of the whole globe with her posses- [illegible] and military posts—their morning drum-beat, follow- [illegible] sun, and keeping company with the hours, circles [illegible] with one continuous and unbroken strain of her [illegible]"

least important, route is to Canada. It is 2,000 miles long between the nearest points in England and Newfoundland. There is one station on it, at Halifax, Nova Scotia, where there is an extensive dockyard and military depôt. The second line is to the West Indies. It is 3,000 miles long between the nearest points. On it there are four stations —Bermuda, the Bahamas (the first point discovered by Columbus), Jamaica, and Antigua. There is an iron dry dock at Bermuda, which was made at Liverpool at a cost of £300,000. The British trade passing over these two routes amounts to upwards of £200,000,000 a year, and it will increase. When the Canadian inter-colonial railway is developed, and the Panama Canal is opened, it will be the best and quickest route to the North Pacific. The third line is to the East, through the Suez Canal. By this it is 4,000 miles to India, and 9,000 to Australia. On it there are seven stations—Gibraltar, a strongly-fortified place; Malta, where we have a naval establishment at least half the size of that of Sheerness; Aden; Cape Comorin; Singapore; Hong Kong; and King George's Sound, in Western Australia. This long chain of stations gives a good idea of the precautions taken to secure the safety of British commerce. Singapore is not only a great naval, but a great commercial emporium, and is destined in time to govern the whole Malayan peninsula, and give it arts and civilisation; while Cape Comorin and Trincomalee are the keys to the farther east. The fourth line is to the south and east by the Cape of Good Hope, and on it there are six stations—Sierra Leone and St. Simon's Bay on the African mainland; the islands of Ascension and St. Helena off the coast; the Mauritius; and King George's Sound. British trade, to the value of £300,000,000, annually passes these two routes. The fifth line is round Cape Horn to the Pacific and Australia. It is 10,000 miles long, and £45,000,000 worth of trade passes over it yearly. It

utilises two of the Cape line stations—Ascension and Sierra Leone; and it has three others—the Falkland Islands (over our conquest of which Dr. Johnson lavished so much eloquence and philosophy); Sydney; and Fiji. Besides these stations, we have a number of naval outposts capable of storing considerable supplies of all naval and military requisites. We have also a dockyard at Yokohama; Esquimault, a landlocked harbour in Vancouver's Island; Hong Kong; and Fernando Po, in the Bight of Benin. There never was an empire with more chinks in its armour; and if we were at war with a great Power, it would tax the combined skill and resources of the colonists and the mother-country to prevent it being pierced in a vital part. Our safety is in our fleet. It is the visible bond which secures the union. But for it we could be denuded of our possessions. England will be the victim of the sea when she shall have ceased to be its queen. It both serves and menaces her. It is the road that will lead our enemies to our hearths when we are unable to patrol it. If our navy dwindled into inefficiency, English workmen would soon find their occupation gone, and the price of bread quadrupled at a stroke.

The system of defence defined by these routes, fortresses, stations, depôts, and dockyards, is the product of ripe experience, and the outcome of generations of observation.. It will suffice for ordinary times; but the aggressive designs that other States have latterly developed necessitate its being strengthened and supplemented. We will require more ships, as well as larger arsenals and shipyards; and it is to provide these that an estimated additional expenditure of nearly £10,000,000 has been sanctioned by Parliament. It was for that end that Port Hamilton was got, and that a sharp eye is being kept over sundry groups of islands in Polynesia. We will see, in a few years, a naval station, equal to Malta, constructed in

them declined. All experience is false, if lessened trade does not follow in the footsteps of lessened strength. Sovereignty has often changed its seat, and trade has uniformly followed it. The correctness of this world-old maxim has had recent verification in Central Asia. Twenty years ago, when Professor Vambery was there, Manchester cottons, Birmingham hardware, and Sheffield cutlery, were found at all the fairs, and most of the bazaars. Since then, Russia has penetrated to, or rather over, the borders of Afghanistan; and now Russian goods are sold, and British goods are banished, from all the markets west of the Heri Rud. In other words, English traders have lost, and Russian traders have gained by the transfer of influence from one empire to the other.

This is a modern, permit me to adduce an ancient, illustration of how like causes have produced like results. The Portuguese were once lords of the Indian seas. Their navigators were the Crusaders of commerce. Lisbon was the medieval London—the mart of the world. It is difficult to trace a resemblance between the daring men who first doubled the Cape, and discovered and settled energetic colonies in far Cathay, and the lethargic mariners and languishing dominions of the present Portugal. The Spaniards, delirious with the riches of South American Eldoradoes, aspired to play the part of the Romans after the conquest of Carthage. Their galleons, freighted with the precious products of two worlds, plied the Pacific unchallenged, and Madrid was the focus of imperial magnificence. But Spain shone like the child whose parents, to display their wealth, covered it with gold leaf, which closed the pores of its skin, and stifled it. The Dutch moored an immense commercial empire to the piles on which they built their houses and palaces. Their ships swept the ocean, and the Hague became the centre of the world's diplomacy. But its splendour has

departed; and so, too, has that of the all-potent Hanseatic League, which once commanded the respect, and defied the power, of kings. Venice, who, "throned on her hundred isles," held the gorgeous East in fee; Florence, who was as famous in trade as in letters; Genoa the Superb, who shook the thrones of Catacuzen; those maritime Mahomedans, the Moors, the "mildest mannered men who ever scuttled ships or cut a throat," where are they all now? I could push the inquiry farther back, and gather confirmation for my argument from the mythic annals of decades of centuries and nations, as they "spin for ever down the ringing grooves of time." Phœnicia, the first pilot in the stream of history; Carthage, to which all lines of wealth bent towards, concentrated in, and then radiated from, lie buried in the dust, without the record of a written line or a chiselled stone. The glory that was Greece, and the power that was Rome, have vanished. And why? Because, intoxicated with success and insolence, they gave themselves up to the Delilah charms of luxury. "Their garments were all fringes, and their meats all sauces." Ease, enervation, and cupidity blinded them. They turned too self-assured and self-indulgent to protect their empires. They first crumbled, then tottered, then fell. They teach an identical moral, and it is this. If dominion goes from a people, trade goes. What has been, will be. If England is to keep her commerce, she must keep her empire; and she can only do that by paying a steady and sufficient premium against all risks; in other language, by being resolved to enforce her rights, and prepared to defend her interests. And this resolve gives a nation something more precious than gold—it gives it character. Our empire cannot be converted into a joint-stock company, involving limited and isolated liabilities.

We have been made, by the irresistible sequence of

events, paramount potentates in the Eastern seas. It is the behest of destiny. Our ships swarm in every creek and harbour; our merchants press everywhere, trade everywhere, settle everywhere; and our captains and consuls follow to protect, and, if need be, to control them. We cannot evade either the dignity or the obligations of the position. These obligations strengthen our national character, prevent us degenerating into parochialisms, and convert a community of merchants into a race of teachers and rulers. The position involves undoubted difficulties; but it should be our glory to confront and overcome them. If we wrestle with them, they will strengthen our nerves and sharpen our skill. When the Athenians learnt of the mighty preparations of the Persian King of Athos, and of the shores of the Hellespont being united, Themistocles told them they had only one refuge—their own courage. Out of that self-reliance came forth those miracles of power—Thermopylæ and Salamis. Englishmen have all the courage in war, the sinew in labour, the cunning in workmanship, the daring in seamanship, that are requisite to constitute them the centre of such a vast territorial circumference. They are the inter-penetrating and binding power—the international amalgam that reaches to all, webs each to each, and all to themselves. That position can only be held, that puissant nationality can only be sustained, that sceptre can only be swayed, by a continuous and undaunted display of the imperial characteristics that won them, and by making our multitudinous obstacles occasions for fresh efforts, and converting new dangers into instruments of new triumph.

It is not sufficient, however, to possess the power—it is necessary to have the will and the ingenuity to apply it. Centuries before any modern nation, when Britain was buried in barbarism, and America was undiscovered and undreamt of, the Chinese made gunpowder, discovered the

mariner's compass, and invented the printing press. They possessed, in these three instruments, the means for securing military, maritime, and literary supremacy, but they had not the nous to utilise them. Gunpowder, in their hands, produced only crackers and fireworks. Junks, to navigate the seaboard, were all they drew from the mariner's compass; while printing produced nothing but stereotyped editions of Confucius. We have not buried our talents in the earth and hid them; but we have made them agents of our enterprise, furrowed the earth with railways, and given aerial wings to human speech. We have fought and conquered, and sailed and traded, through every zone; foreign skies only uncoiling the strength, and adding to the electric energy, of the race. Character in a nation, as in a man, is strength. And it is cumulative. The consciousness of a train of great achievements behind adds to its present force and dignity, and guarantees them for the future. Courage calls forth emulation.

But assuming that the benefits of the Empire were less, can we dissolve the international partnership, and capriciously break up such a gigantic moral and physical apparatus. Consider what would happen if we did so. The colonies do not seek separation. They may quarrel with the Colonial Office, but they never quarrel with England. Their royalty is more than a sentiment; it is a passion. Although strong as a part of a great confederation, they would be weak if alone. The colonies could not stand by themselves; and would either become the victims of civil contention, or the prey of some prowling Power ready to play the part of buccaneer or bully. Our exit from India would mean Russian entrance, and, preparatory to that, a reign of loot and rapine. The native princes, like eels in a jar would wriggle for ascendancy; and, whoever secured it, humanity would suffer and civilisation be retarded. South Africa would become the prize of slave-

holding Boers, or a hunting ground for marauding tribes. The West Indies might be seized by the United States; but, before that was done, we would see a servile war, in which the dominant race enmities would be revived; the hopes which England has nourished of redeeming the negroes would be blighted; and the sacrifices she has made so ungrudgingly for that purpose would be thrown away. The shock of separation might shake Canada into the American Union, and our large Pacific possessions into a federation; but the smaller ones would fall into the covetous embraces of Germany and France. Colonies, with mixed and aboriginal populations, could not be abandoned without positive cruelty. But this is not all. A desertion of our posts, as mediators or masters, would be followed by a demand for indemnity to those settlers whose position, assumed on our security, would no longer be tenable. It is estimated that the European investments in British dependencies, in loans, land, railways, and public and private works, equal in amount our National Debt. All this large sum would be endangered, and most of it lost, if we severed the connection. Can any Englishman anticipate such a sacrifice with equanimity, or any patriot contemplate such a catastrophe with composure? No. We cannot, without a dereliction of duty, amounting to a crime, capriciously abandon the obligations of protection and control we have voluntarily assumed. Sympathy for the native races, whom we have rescued from barbarism; justice to our countrymen, who have staked their property and imperilled their lives on the faith of the imperial connection; security for the men who have driven the eagle to higher retreats, and the panther to deeper jungles, who have converted swamp, morass, and wilderness into scenes radiant with contentment, and who have lessened the misery at home by creating markets abroad; devotion to the regenerating civilisation, which robes men in the nobler raiment of

rectitude and moral principles, calls into exercise the highest capacities of the human soul, and opens up a boundless infinitude of resources—would all combine to brand us as infamous for such a wanton and selfish repudiation of our responsibility, as the demolition of the Empire would involve. I would appeal from Englishmen's interests to their duties; from their pockets to their consciences, from their Epicurean timidity to their traditions of liberty; from ignoble ease to memories that will not die, and cannot be destroyed, against such sacrilege and cowardice.

As we cannot abandon the Empire, in what manner shall we govern it? How must we deal with our dependencies? and how with the nations with whom they bring us always into contact, often in competition, and sometimes in conflict? First, as to our dependencies? We must have a centre. Sovereignty must reside somewhere, and that sovereignty cannot be elsewhere than in England. Nationality is not imagination only. It is a powerful bond of action. Like the mainspring of a watch, it sets the whole machinery in motion; like the heart, it causes the pulse of life to beat in the farthest extremities of the system. It is the soul which animates and exalts the whole brotherhood of associated men. This sentiment should be, and is, the link of life between England and her colonies. The less it is regulated, the more robust it will grow. The fullest freedom, compatible with union, is a specific alike for the relief of the mother country, the masculine well-being of the dependencies, and the vigorous integrity of the Empire. Along with absolute local liberty, give the colonists their proportionate share of imperial authority. Let them feel that the difference between the colonist and the citizen is a difference of distance, and not of status or influence. England's greatness is their greatness; England's honour is their honour; Eng-

land's glory is their glory. They cannot separate themselves from her past history, nor her future fortunes. The ties of kindred, the instincts of race, and common tradition, are, and ever will be, the motive forces. In such a spirit of liberality, forbearance, and justice, we should rule the colonies; and, if we do, we shall " grapple them to us with hoops of steel." There is not time, nor is this the occasion, in which to indicate a method of federation. I am only preaching the principle. It is capable of embodiment, in a form that will promote unity, preserve liberty, foster local independence, and give strength and splendour to the British Empire.

Great power means many responsibilities, and a great empire means many wars. Out of the 16,000,000 of people in the colonies, about half are of British descent. In the other half, nearly every known race is represented. Most of this non-European population is in Africa and the West Indies. There are about 100,000 red Indians in Canada, who live partly on their own resources and partly by Government subsidies; and about 40,000 Maoris. The Maoris have the franchise, and send members to the New Zealand Parliament. Both in America and in the Pacific the natives are inoffensive, but they are rapidly disappearing. In South Africa and the West Indies, on the other hand, they thrive and multiply. One of the most gratifying results of English colonisation is the steady rise of the social position of the aborigines. In increasing numbers, they are becoming not only labourers, but skilled agriculturists, merchants, contractors, and professional men. The difficulties with them, and the disputes with those across the border who are allied to them by descent and creed, involve us in interminable embroilments. This is one of the penalties of empire. We have had only one European war since the treaty concluded at Vienna seventy years ago; but we have had thirty colonial wars during

that period. It is impossible to calculate the combined cost of all these military operations, big and little, to the mother-country and her dependencies; but it cannot have been less than £200,000,000, or an average of £3,000,000 a year. We cannot avoid frontier collisions, and we cannot save this outlay. Whenever civilised and savage, or semi-savage people come in contact, friction first, and then fighting, are inevitable. But by respecting native susceptibilities, by honesty in our dealings, and by justice in our treatment of our unlettered neighbours and fellow-subjects, we may minimise the disquietude and trouble. The colonies are not governed for our benefit alone, but for the treble benefit of settlers, aborigines, and the mother-country. No nation has heretofore acted on this principle. Other states have treated their colonies as spoils, and their inhabitants as slaves. Hence their failure. Unredeemed brute force has never led to permanent conquest. No inferior race ever displaced a superior one, except when the superior one had first become demoralised. Inferior races have swept over lands as scavengers—clearing the way for better tenants. They have never held what they won. The ultimate victory has always been for the fittest, and it will be so with England. So long, and so long only, as she shows herself fit and equal to the task, will she hold her own against the wild and warlike clans that converge on her every frontier, and threaten all her outposts.

England, up to the reign of Elizabeth, had only gone to war for kingly aggrandisement or renown. She then went for a principle—the solidarity of free States. There has seldom been a time when Europe has not been dominated by an autocrat. Forty years ago, it was Russia; then it was France; now it is Germany. In Elizabeth's days, it was Spain. Conceiving Europe's danger to be her own, England gallantly placed herself between the tyrant and his prey. The achievements of her statesmen,

at that era, dwarf the feats of modern diplomatists; while her warriors inspired the awe of her enemies, and won the admiration of all ages. England then emerged from an insular to an imperial position. The nation was alive in every fibre. Cromwell maintained the position with imperial imperiousness. He intimidated Holland, humiliated Spain, and twisted the supple Mazarin round his fingers. These nations were unfriendly to the rising power of England; but they swerved before the authority of the man who had coerced at once her aristocracy and her factions. Political debauch succeeded political purity. Charles II. wiped out the record of English fame and influence by shameless dependence and corruption. England's king became a pensioner of France, who had worked her way to the sway Spain had lost, and, in her turn, jeopardised the independence of Europe. Again England stood in the breach. William the Third gave her freedom, and us a National Debt. The historic policy was sustained by his predecessors. Another war trebled our debt, but secured the Hanoverian succession, and our North American colonies. Under the corrupt administration of Walpole, we kept tolerably clear of foreign entanglements; but, while subjected to the inspiring pulsation of the two Pitts, England became continental arbitress. There was not a cannon fired in Europe that we did not demand to know the reason why. We fought the battles of foreign sovereigns, subsidised their armies, lavished blood and treasure to keep them on their thrones; and when peace came, we frequently found ourselves abandoned and betrayed, by the men who owed their crowns to our unexampled exertions, unparalleled fortitude, and unprecedented public spirit.

The melancholy outcome of the last war with France was a political system, which mercilessly violated the most sacred rights of humanity, and impiously claimed the Judge

of the earth as an accomplice in its tyranny. Europe was held under the heel of autocracy, and the first symptom of revolt was stamped out, as we stamp out the first symptom of cattle plague. Mr. Canning promised that England would make "inharmonious the music of the Holy Alliance;" and, had he lived longer, he would have done more to redeem his pledge. But even despots cannot dethrone human nature. The struggle for liberty recommenced at the foot of the scaffold. The idea gained strength here with the hammer and the anvil. The blood-stained compact of the tyrannical triumvirate, devised to strangle freedom and national aspirations, has been overturned. A dozen royal dynasties have been engulfed in the abyss of popular fury. Belgium has been separated from Holland; Greece has risen from the tomb; Austria has been driven out of Italy; Germany has been united; Russian preponderance has been destroyed; the Bourbons have been expelled from France, to be succeeded, first, by a Napoleon, and then by a Republic; while forgotten and almost unknown races, Slavonian and Roumanian, have disinterred their traditionary titles, and secured representation in the congress of nations. And all this in the short space of forty years! It is a tempting recital, and contains much over which a politician may usefully moralise.

Time will only allow me to summarise, in a few sentences, the leading purposes of England's foreign policy. Its object up to the sixteenth century was personal, and not national. It was the offspring of royal emergencies and aristrocratic intrigues. The objects sought by the Elizabethan and Cromwellian statesmen were Protestant ascendancy, and colonial expansion. The objects sought by King William and Queen Anne were the assuring of the Hanoverian succession, and the establishment of the balance of power—a device of the Italian republics, by which they hoped, through combination, to curb the

If we have no hostile interest with a nation, it lessens the causes of war; but what forms genuine and durable alliances is the reciprocity of sympathies. Neighbouring Powers will find their best guarantee for tranquility in combining wise forbearance with mutual respect. Let us hold to every state, whether powerful or weak, friendly but firm language, and observe a courteous, temperate, but unequivocal course of conduct. We gain nothing by trying to conciliate those who wish to intimidate. Do not let us mistake cowardice for prudence. The white feather has often been dabbled in blood. If our rights are infringed, our interests imperilled, our honour outraged, address the offenders in the memorable words of Lord Dalhousie :—" I want peace; I have laboured for peace; but if you are bent upon war, war you shall have, and with a vengeance."

I have described what the British Empire is, rapidly summarised its extent, character, and population, shown how it was built up, how it is held, and what is the cost of holding it; I have set out the obligations it entails, and the benefit it confers, and have adduced from them that interest, duty, and honour require us to keep it. I have outlined the policy we have followed with our colonies, and with foreign powers, and indicated where, and in what way, I agree with, and differ from it. I am for holding our own at all hazards, for not meddling in the internal affairs of free states; for not seeking fresh territory, but for resolutely asserting our rights, and discharging our duties, whatever the cost and sacrifice to our kindred and our kind. This is the source and sanction of progress. Nothing is sacred but justice, and nothing stable but right. Like the old Crusaders, we should wear on our breasts the symbols of our faith. I believe there lurks beneath the workman's jacket a spark of the sacred fire which burned in British breasts when her heroic sons counted no odds in the fight for liberty.

XV.—INDIA—SUEZ CANAL—AFGHANISTAN.

Speech delivered during the General Election, in the Bath Lane Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, November 19th, 1885.

The history of that unique political fabric, the British Empire in India, supplies a curious example of the at least apparent influence of small things on great. It was because the Dutch, who had at the time a monopoly of trade with the East, had raised the price of pepper from three shillings to eight shillings per pound, that the East India Company was projected; it was because the doctor to the English embassy at the Court of Delhi cured the Great Mogul of a bilious attack that the Grand Charter was conceded; it was because the cartridges of the Enfield rifles were greased with the fat of a cow, that the Sepoys mutinied, and that the patrimony of the Company was transferred to the Crown. Perhaps this is mistaking opportunities for causes. That the sequence of events, without the aid of pepper, purgatives, or greased cartridges, would not have led up to the same result, it would be rash to say; but that circumstances, as singular as they were trifling and unforeseen, should have carried with them such consequences, is at least curious.

In ancient times, India was the principal source of commerce with the Venetians, Carthaginians, and Egyptians. At the end of the fifteenth century, the trade was exclusively in the hands of the Venetians and the Genoese. The merchandise came partly through Egypt, and partly by caravan through the interior of Asia. The position of affairs was revolutionised by the Portuguese reaching

India by sea. Half pirates, half merchants, they soon became possessed of the chief ports. They brought the stuffs, the spices, and precious stones of the East to the Tagus, and undersold the Venetians, who had all the cost of land carriage, and arbitrary customs to bear. Avarice and love of plunder were the main motives of the Portuguese adventurers. A revolting abuse of power excited the resistance of the natives, who had been armed against each other by the artful policy of the strangers, but who now became united in the presence of a common danger. The Dutch followed the Portuguese, as the Portuguese had followed the Venetians, and wove a commercial net that drew the greater part of the world's wealth within their dykes. Commerce, as her historian says, plucked Holland up half-drowned, and poured gold into her lap. It was from her colonies that she drew the means that enabled her to defeat the designs of Spain, and made her strong enough to defy the combined forces of France and England. When she was supreme in India, she was the first mercantile Power in the world. But England followed, outstripped, and supplanted her.

The East India Company, with a capital of £70,000 and 125 shareholders, was formed at a meeting, held in London, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, in September, 1600; and, on the last day of the same year it was incorporated by Royal Charter. The preamble quaintly summarised its objects, which were the honour of the nation, the extension of English discovery and navigation, the advancement of English trade, the increase of the people's riches, and the benefit of the Commonwealth. How this trading company purchased, first, the sites of scattered warehouses; how these expanded to fortified factories, and, ultimately, as if by enchantment, into an empire which rivals in extent that of Alexander or Tamerlane, constitutes one of the

most marvellous chapters in the annals of time. The rapidity of the acquisition, the commanding attributes and transforming influence of the dominant race, and the smallness of the means used compared with the vastness of the objects gained, are even more remarkable than the scope of the possessions secured. England is not indebted for her success, as the Tartars were in China, solely to the superiority of armies; nor, as the conquerors of Rome were, to overwhelming masses; nor, as the Arabs were, to religious fanaticism, propagated by the sword; nor, as the Spaniards in America were, to superstition, the natives taking the followers of Pizarro for Centaurs, and the fire from their arms as lightning from heaven. To none of these causes do we owe our ascendency, but to the valour, fortitude, and resource of a handful of Englishmen, capable of any desperate service that has daylight and honour in it. Against the appliances of European civilization, and the magazines of inexhaustible British energy, intelligent but feeble and decrepit Asiatics could make no stand.

Our average English politicians systematically ignore India, on the pretext that it is so far, so foreign, and so complex, that they have not leisure to study it. They attach no discredit to the most ludicrous ignorance of the country, its geography, history, and political and social condition. But while thus indifferent to the most costly military investment, and the most arduous political adventure any nation ever embarked in, they can work themselves into convulsions over questions that are both frivolous and far-fetched. Yet, the slightest reflection would convince them that India disaffected is a palsy of England's right side—India in rebellion is a devouring ulcer in her flank. I would like to try to show, as far as my ability and time will permit, how arbitrarily and authoritatively India affects English politics, and how closely

its concerns come home to us all in our daily life. Will you listen? Well, then, what is British India? Its length from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin is 1,900 miles, and its greatest breadth is about the same. This compact domain, along with British Burmah, a strip on the eastern shore of the Bay of Bengal, contains one and a half million square miles, and nearly two hundred and fifty millions of inhabitants. British India, therefore, has an area and a population about equal to the area and population of the whole of Europe, less Russia. It has just ten times the population of England and Wales, and more than double the population that Gibbon estimated was possessed by Imperial Rome. Our Indian dominions include within their boundaries every variety of climate and product; but they are roughly divided into three well-defined regions. The first comprises the Himalayas, which means the dwelling place of snow, the most stupendous range of mountains in the world, and their intermediate valleys and adjacent slopes. The second is the river plains in the north, which were the scene of ancient movements which shaped the civilization and designs of the whole peninsula. The third is the triangular table-land in the south, which has a physical character and race development peculiar to itself. The inhabitants are roughly divided into four great races; but they are subdivided into scores of distinct nations, castes, and tribes. There is great disparity in their physical aspects and forms, in their manners and customs, in their respective advance in civilization, and in their modes of faith and language. Between the people in the same provinces there is as much difference as there is between the Greeks and Germans, the Italians and Russians, the Spaniards and Swedes. England's task is to devise and direct the administrative machinery which unites these scattered and discordant races into a pacific and united empire. It is a stupendous undertaking, suffi-

cient to tax the energies of the strongest, and daunt the courage of the bravest.

The passage of the East India Company from a trading to a governing corporation; first its subordination to, and then suppression by Parliament, are matters of detail that lie beyond the scope of my argument. It is sufficient, for my purpose, to say that the Secretary of State for India, who is responsible to Parliament, and must be a member of the Cabinet, is now invested with all the powers formerly exercised by the East India Company and the old Board of Control. He is aided by a Council of fifteen members, all of whom must have served or resided ten years in India. The executive in India is vested in a Viceroy, who is assisted by a Cabinet, whose members preside, respectively, over the departments of foreign affairs, interior, finance, and military administration, and by a Council for making laws and regulations. For the purposes of administration, India is apportioned into Presidencies, each with a governor and council of its own. These Presidencies are divided into provinces, and the provinces into districts. There are three Presidencies, fifty-three provinces, and about two hundred and forty districts, with an average population to each district of about 800,000. The administrative system is compact, searching, progressive, and law-worthy. Its defects are exclusiveness and over-centralization. The tendency of all recent reforms, however, has been towards relaxation; and efforts are now made to foster the nascent germs of local life. Formerly, the provincial governors were merely tax-gatherers. Now, they have a certain and growing control over the expenditure. This disposition to decentralization is commendable, and a step towards administrative liberality. It has been accompanied by a concession to the demands of the natives for official recognition and confidence. They are no l[illegible] Native

members have seats on the Viceroy's Council, and on all the councils of the subordinate governors; while native lawyers have reached the highest judicial posts. The old theory was, everything for the people and nothing by them. That is being modified slowly, but still surely and hopefully. Take our Indian administrative system as a whole, it has, in spite of infirmities, mistakes, abuses, and even occasional crimes, well sustained the part of an enlightened ruler, and established a moral claim to a reciprocal allegiance. Still, it has been, and is, in the main, a despotism—a beneficent despotism, it is true, but a despotism nevertheless, founded on military power, though modelled and controlled by civil abilities of the highest order. After making every allowance for recent and projected reforms, and for the undoubted disposition of all parties to lighten the burdens and enlarge the liberties of the Indian people, there is no gainsaying the fact that we hold the country by the sword. Our position there, and our position in the other colonies, is very dissimilar. The colonies would not leave us if we wanted them to do so. India would not stay with us unless we compelled her.

Are we justified in forcibly retaining the rulership of two hundred and fifty millions of people over four thousand miles away from our shores? It requires great sacrifices at our hands. India has involved us in many a war, and loaded us with many a debt. It has strained our resources, and distracted our energies, by constantly requiring from us a vast expenditure of life and effort to guard it against dangers, and preserve it from attack. Is it worth all this? Especially is it worth it when our self-denial does not secure us the goodwill of the people we do so much to serve? I think it is, and I will tell you why. First, and chiefly, in the interests of the Indians themselves. I put their case first, for if we cannot show that our rule

has benefited them, no advantage that may accrue to us from it would justify its retention. We have been there as rulers just over one hundred years. The primary condition of civilized existence, that which precedes all others, is security for life and property. A century ago, the Indians had not this. Now, they have it absolutely. From the earliest times, Central Asian marauders poured periodically over the Indian borders, plundered without restraint, and massacred without mercy. There were six invasions in the hundred years antecedent to Clive's conquest. These invasions were not like those of France by Germany, or Russia by Bonaparte. They consisted of a host of from twenty to one hundred thousand reckless barbarians, who marched through the country, burning and despoiling out of sheer wantonness and cruelty. When they had had a surfeit of slaughter, they usually closed their raid by a final sack and ravage of the capital of the invaded country. The Persian Nadir Shah terminated his invasion, in 1739, by ordering a general massacre in Delhi. One hundred and fifty thousand persons—men, women, and children—were hacked to pieces. The invaders carried off booty amounting to one hundred and twenty-five million pounds, and left the city stripped and desolate. The Afghan butcheries were even more brutal than the Persian, and were attended by incidents that won't bear recital. Such were the invaders from the land side. But India was open to equally desperate attacks from the sea. Her shores were infested by pirates, who swept down on her ports, sailed up her rivers, harried her villages, and depopulated whole districts, killing or carrying off the inhabitants into slavery. Those were the human devastations. But the peaceful and industrious natives were liable also to incursions of wild beasts, which were quite as disastrous. The fastnesses of the mountains, and the jungles of the plains, furnished covers for ferocious animals. For fifteen hun-

dred miles, along the base of the Himalayas, there stretched a belt of territory from twenty to fifty miles broad, and comprising thirty thousand square miles, which no one dared to cultivate. This desert borderland yielded no food for man, but teemed with fierce beasts of prey, who sallied forth nightly to ravage the herds and hamlets in the open country. Malaria was generated, and deadly fevers bred in this dismal district. They created havoc amongst all who attempted to cross it. But the natives made no attempt to clear it, as it was a partial protection from the savage hillmen on the other side. The helpless and languid Hindoos, who had for ages been trampled on by men of bolder and hardier nature, were thus worried and scourged, robbed and beaten, by beast and man, from sea and land. Lawlessness breeds lawlessness, and bands of robbers, the residuum of Afghan or piratical invaders, with here and there a peasant who had been dispossessed of his possessions, ranged themselves into bands, sometimes of fifty thousand strong, who made violence their calling and plunder their means of living. These banditti were associated with professional stranglers, with whom murder was a trade. To add to its miseries, the country was, from periodical drought, and want of means of transit for food and water, liable to famine, in which tens of thousands of people died. Lord Cornwallis reported that twenty years after the great famine in Bengal, one third of the territory that was previously populous and prosperous had been abandoned to wild beasts. The people had perished, and the land had gone back to jungle.

This brief and bald synopsis gives a faint idea of the state of the country when it came under British domination. What is it now? Invasions from Central Asia have ceased. As a consequence, thirteen thousand square miles of frontier jungle have been brought under cultiva-

tion. The Director-General of Statistics to the Governor of India calculates that this reclaimed land will produce eighteen million pounds' worth of food, or more than the average normal cost of the Indian Army, and the whole defence of the Indian Empire. From the fertile valleys of Assam, which were formerly the scenes of periodical devastation, are annually exported, chiefly to this country, three million pounds' sterling worth of tea. And this is but one of the numberless regions which have been similarly transformed. Piracy has been extirpated, and the Indian seas and rivers are now as safe as the German Ocean or our English waterways. Robber gangs, and all the special border crimes, have ceased. Crime, indeed, is less in India than in England. For every million of men in Great Britain, there are eight hundred and seventy; and for every million of women there are three hundred and forty criminals always in gaol. In India, there are only six hundred and fourteen male and twenty-eight female prisoners in gaol for each million of population. In other words, there are more than one-half fewer men, and one-twelfth fewer women prisoners in India than in the United Kingdom. An astounding change! This is the result of civil, not military measures. Dr. Hunter says that the existence of an army is less realized in any rural district in Bengal than in any English county. Of the sixty-three millions in that province, probably forty millions go through life without ever seeing a soldier. The ravages of wild beasts have all but ceased. The ancient Indian lion has disappeared. Wolves are dying out, and the complaint of English sportsmen is that they can seldom get a shot at a tiger. To prevent wild elephants becoming extinct, a close time has been established for them. The only creature that defies the energy of the British Government is the snake. The deaths from wild beasts and poisonous reptiles, last century, were

estimated to be nearly two hundred thousand annually; now, they are near eighteen thousand. Famines have not ceased, but they have been shorn of their intensity. A vast organization of preventive and remedial agencies is constantly kept in readiness to deal with them. Heart-rending as was the calamitous dearth in 1877 and 1878, it produced no result analogous to former famines, when it was quite common for half the peasantry of a province to perish, and for the landed classes to be so completely disorganized that one-third of the land relapsed to wilderness.

We have given, then, security to property, and confidence to the people. What have they done with them? Why, the very magnitude of the benefits conferred leads sceptical minds to detract from the achievements, and question their reality. They rest, however, upon too firm a basis to be hurriedly disproved. Here are a few of them. Our rule in India had its origin in commerce, and our efforts have been directed to its development. Former conquerors strove to secure military dominion and religious predominance. The Moguls erected grand palaces; the Hindoos elegant temples; the Mussulmans magnificent mausoleums ; and the Mahrattas huge forts. The English have built big cities. Their designs are industrial and mercantile. The natives are agriculturists. Eighty per cent. of them live on the land; only eight per cent. in this country do so. We have introduced English modes of life to India, and given a stimulus to the population. Formerly, their towns were but camps, around which, as round an old feudal castle, merchants and artificers congregated for protection and traffic. When the courts or the camps were removed, the settlers were scattered, and the settlement reverted to prairie or jungle. Emporiums of trade, such as they now have, they had not. This growth of great towns is char[illegible] evidence of British ascen-

dency. A century ago, Calcutta consisted of three mud hamlets, barely out of water-mark. It has now a population of 800,000, or nearly double that of any place in the United Kingdom, except London. It is the second city of the Empire. When we took it, its sea-borne trade was not worth £20 a year. It now amounts to seventy millions—while its home and export trade together is valued at one hundred and ten millions. Bombay, the second city in India, was, along with Tangiers, part of the dowry of the wife of Charles the Second, and he sold it to the East India Company as a trading station for £10 a year. It has now a population of seven hundred and eighty thousand, or nearly double that of Manchester. We are justifiably proud of the money we have lavished, and the skill we have displayed, in improving the Tyne, but our engineering operations sink into insignificance, when contrasted with the stupendous contest between man and nature that has been successfully waged on the banks of the Hooghly, and amidst the pestiferous swamps of Bengal. There is nothing which reflects the influence of European ideas more than the growth of great commercial centres. It is indicative of the growth of the industrial life of the people.

But as great a change has taken place in the methods of Indian manufactures as in the method of their commerce. India had, along with her agriculture, many skilled handicrafts. It was their goods, as much as their rich materials, that first attracted European customers. Their fine muslins, their rich silks and brocades, and their harmonious cotton prints, far surpassed our mediæval workmanship. It is customary to credit the Indians with a chronic and unadaptable conservatism. In a sense, this is true; but, in recent years, they have shown a remarkable acuteness in adapting their cultivation to the requirements of commerce. This is shown by the manner in which they have extended their production of jute, cotton, and wheat.

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trade in cotton, jute, and wheat, there has been a development of the coal trade. India has now an annual output of one million tons—about one-fifth that of Belgium, and one-eighth that of America. Cotton mills have followed the opening of the coalfields. There are now nearly two million spindles employed in that manufacture, and nearly fifty thousand in the manufacture of jute. Twenty-six years ago, there was not a single loom worked by steam-power in India. In 1830, all the produce that the Indians were able to export amounted to eleven millions sterling. In 1880, they were able to send sixty-six million pounds' worth of Indian produce, or six times as much. Now, the total trade of India—of imports and exports together—amounts to one hundred and twenty-two millions sterling. These figures imply a stupendous change in the industrial condition of the inhabitants—such a change as has not taken place, in the same period of time, in any country of which we have any record. India now exports, as the products of her soil and workmanship, an annual average of twenty-one million pounds' worth of goods more than she imports. With one-third of this sum—or seven millions—she pays interest for the construction of public works. With the second third, she pays for the government that has secured her the opportunity of making so much profit. The last third—seven millions—goes direct into the pockets of the people, and, to that extent, aids in bettering their condition.

Along with increased trade, there has been increased revenue. It has trebled in forty years, and risen twenty-five per cent., even within the last dull decade. The land-tax has, in the same period, increased more than sixty-five per cent., and yet it still only forms one-half its old proportion to the total revenue of India. Land, which was once the most precarious property in India, is now the safest. Money will be lent upon it for one-third the in-

terest got on other investments. This is, perhaps, the strongest proof that can be adduced of the sense of security that English rule has engendered. We have changed the whole face of the country by covering it with a network of railroads, telegraphs, and canals. They have multiplied and secured its internal resources, while the spacious harbours that have been constructed have brought these resources into the markets of the world. The length of Indian railways now open is twelve thousand miles, and they have cost sixty million pounds. On canal and irrigation works, there have been expended twenty-four million pounds. Sixty-three thousand miles of telegraphs have been laid, while the postal system is nearly as completely developed as in this country. These are some of the salient, though by no means all the material results that have come out of British rule.

But the efforts to emancipate the Indian people from ignorance, as well as from degrading forms of superstition, are a more splendid memorial of British rule than the material progress that has been made. We have founded universities, established colleges, built schools, trained teachers, appointed directors of public instruction, and spent large sums of money for educational institutions, old and new. We have broken in upon the enervating system of caste, and we have now two millions of children receiving instruction in public schools. They are learning that all occupations and professions are open to every native in India as freely as they are to natives in England. The press is free. There are two hundred and fifty papers printed in the vernacular, while an average of five to six thousand books are published every year. Everywhere we are disinterestedly and skilfully labouring to stimulate and instruct the minds of the people. An enormously increased trade, diminished taxation, immunity from invasion, growing scarcity of famine and dearth, with laws

honestly made and justly and purely dispensed, are some of the advantages that have accrued to the people of India from the English Government.

This, very incompletely told, is the Indian side of the account. Now for the English. What advantages have we got from India? It is not easy to apportion them with precision, for the relations and advantages are mutual. But let me enumerate some of them. India is not a colony in the sense that Canada and Australia are. It does not offer an outlet for our surplus population as they do. The tropical climate, and the impossibility of transmitting to an Indian posterity the vigour of European constitution, and of promoting general intermarriages between the races put us at a disadvantage with other conquerors who settled in the country and became part of the population. India is a field of positive duty and prospective usefulness, but it is not an arena for emigration. It is, however, an increasingly valuable market for our goods. At the close of the French war, our total trade with India, imports and exports combined, amounted to eleven millions sterling a year. It now amounts to little short of eighty millions. India buys from us thirty-two millions' worth of English manufactures, or one-eighth of our exports every year. She takes, annually, five million pounds' worth more goods than America does, and one-third more than Australia does. She is, in fact, our best customer. Our largest trade with her is in soft goods. She consumes about one-third of all we export, taking twenty-five million pounds' worth out of the seventy-six millions' worth, which is the amount we send abroad. She buys, annually, about six million pounds' worth of cutlery and hardware, and nearly two millions' worth of machinery and railway plant. A striking fact, and one worth noting, is this:—During the last five years, we have had a languid trade. Our exports have fallen off with all foreign countries materially, and

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repelling forces are religious and racial, and not political or national. The struggle is for clan or caste or creed—not for a country. After a succession of internecine feuds, generated by these motives, chaos would come again. There would be a repetition of the scenes that occurred after Nadir Shah sacked Delhi, and the Mogul Empire was overthrown. The cry from Afghan tribesmen and Turcoman freebooters would be the old one—blood and booty. When anarchy had exhausted itself, other, and not such considerate aliens would step into our vacant place. The people would exchange one foreign ruler for another. They would get a ruler who would oppress and crush them, in the place of one who has committed great wrongs, made many blunders, who has sometimes been unjust and often violent, but who generally meant well in the past, and who always means well now. Is that a result that any patriotic Englishman can contemplate with equanimity and satisfaction? It would dash all our dreams of permanent influence and ubiquitous beneficence. It would be fatal to our position as a nation, and irreparably injurious to civilization.

If we must keep India, we must keep the roads to it. There are two—one by the canal and the other by the sea. The former is the shortest, but not at all times the safest. The idea of a waterway across the Isthmus of Suez is not new. Fifteen hundred years before Christ, there was one. Herodotus and Strabo both described the canal in their days. It was then wide and deep—the latter saw it full of ships. It fell into decay, but was restored by the Roman Emperor Trajan. It was again abandoned till about the year 600 A.D., but was re-opened by the Caliph Omar, and kept navigable for 150 years. The old cutting was finally filled up at the instance of a rebellious Moslem leader, with the object of preventing provisions being carried to Mecca. More than one Sultan proposed to re-

make it. So, too, did Napoleon Bonaparte and Mehemet Ali. No serious beginning, however, was made with the scheme till M. de Lesseps devised, and, with the aid of the late Emperor of the French, and the approval of all the maritime Powers of Europe, except England, completed the present canal. Lord Palmerston held that it was politically undesirable, and Mr. Robert Stephenson held that it was physically impossible. Whether the first opinion was right, time will decide; but, that the second one was wrong, the experience of the last twenty years has shown. The canal exactly reversed what took place when the passage round the Cape of Good Hope was discovered. At that time, there were three land routes to India—one by way of Egypt and the Red Sea; another by Bagdad and Antioch; and a third, through Armenia, by Trebizond and Persia. It was over these toilsome tracks that the oriental merchandise was conveyed to ports in Egypt and Asia Minor, from whence it was passed on to the West by the vessels of the Venetians and Genoese. When Vasco da Gama got to Goa, direct by the sea, the longer but cheaper way was resorted to, and used exclusively until Lieutenant Wagner initiated the overland mail route in 1845, and M. de Lesseps inaugurated his canal in 1869. The canal has revolutionised the carrying trade, and largely helped to displace sailing ships. Special interests have, without question, been injured by it. Indian produce, which formerly came to England, and was subsequently redistributed over Europe, now goes direct to its destination without paying toll to our customs, or finding freights for our ships. We are sectional sufferers to that extent. On the other hand, the community at large has been immensely benefited by the impetus which the short route has imparted to commerce. Fully 85 per cent. of the goods we send to India go by way of the Canal, and fully 50 per cent. of the goods we get from India come by the

Canal. Last year, 2,537 British ships, with a tonnage of 6,200,000, went through the Canal. In the same time, all the rest of the world sent only 760 ships, with a total tonnage of 1,900,000, We have, therefore, 80 per cent. of the traffic, pay more than 80 per cent. of the dues, and hold one-half of the Canal.

These figures demonstrate at once the preponderance of our Eastern trade, and our stake in the Canal. Both for mercantile and strategic purposes, it is of first importance to the British Empire. Is it politic to have the vast imperial and commercial interests of the nation dependent on a ditch, cut through a foreign, and possibly hostile country, and managed by a company having rival if not antagonistic purposes? One of the effects of the application of science to military operations has been to render the breaking out of hostilities more sudden than formerly. If we should unexpectedly be involved in war in India, it would be easy to cut us off from ready access to the East by the use of a few pounds of dynamite, by the sinking of a few barges, or by the sacrifice of an ironclad. The Canal is the weakest link in our imperial chain. Our position with respect to it is altogether anomalous, and is neither dignified nor safe. We opposed its construction, and now we are its principal customers. We recognize it to be the gate to India, and we leave the key in other hands. We pay its expenses, while others make the laws under which we are permitted to use it. The late Government proposed to neutralize it; but that would not serve us. At the very time we needed it most we might be deprived of its use. Neutralization would benefit all other maritime Powers more than it would do us. Our power on the sea is supreme, and to neutralize any portion of it would be to remove it from our control. Our interest is to extend as widely as possible the activity of our fleet in times of war; and to declare any waters neutral is to

limit that activity. If the Canal is neutralized, we must guard its extremities; but, if we cannot traverse it, we derive no advantage from its existence. The accidental block might be timed to occur coincident with the arrival of the British transports at the entrance. The entire length of the Mediterranean would then lie between the fleet and the alternative Cape route, if it should be decided to resort to it in preference to waiting an indefinite time for the restoration of the channel. If fighting were excluded from the neutral waters, it would rage outside. Our ships would be exposed to attack before entering, and after leaving the portion of the way protected by international police. What is wanted is the undivided command of a road to our possessions, as short as the Canal, and as safe as the ocean. Existing arrangements give us neither security in time of war, nor adequate accommodation in times of peace. Neutralization will leave our risks unguarded, and weaken our power of defence. What has been may be. As Mahomet-ben-Abdoullah-ben-Hassen-ben-el-Horem-ben-Ali-ben-Abou-Thaleb—a vassal of the Caliph Irac—closed the Canal in the hope that it would cripple his chief, so some modern rebel leader, with not so long a name—but with an equally long head, may try to cripple us by doing the same thing. It was Napoleon's intention to seize Egypt, construct a canal, and use both as a base for his contemplated operations against our possessions in India. May not recent geographical re-arrangements prompt the revival of this programme by some future Napoleon? It is a contingency not to be overlooked or under-estimated.

The disparity between our military interests in the Canal, and that of all nations put together, is even greater than that between our shipping and theirs. They have isolated colonies, calling for little beyond formal protection and efficient police. We have a vast Empire to

from these quarters. Beloochistan is virtually ours. We have subsidised all its chiefs. They are harmless, if not friendly; and Persia has neither the means nor the desire for aggression. All she wants is to be left alone. The only crack in our armour is to be found through Afghanistan. There we can be struck in a vital part. The circumstances have changed, and the changed conditions necessitate strengthened barriers. If you live amongst an honest and thinly-scattered population, your dwelling requires little further fastening than will keep out the weather; but if you dwell in the neighbourhood of thieves, you require to take precautions against experts in the use of housebreaking instruments as well as against wind and rain. The Afghans are restless, and, at times, troublesome, but they are not dangerous neighbours. Behind these Oriental Highlanders, however—like a dark mountain slowly emerging from the rising mist, we can now distinguish the broad outlines of a hostile and threatening Power. It is not the Asiatic Roderick Dhus that trouble us—but a more powerful potentate in the background. A cordon that was protection enough against the one is not sufficient against the other, skilled as he is in the arts and implements of political burglary. That better security is wanted against the trained forces of the Czar than against the loosely-organised militia of any Afghan Ameer, does not admit of controversy.

We are often invited not to distrust Russia, and we are assured, in the blandest terms, that our fears of her are exaggerated. My reply to such remonstrances is brief and complete. Nations have often fallen from excess of confidence, never from excess of caution. All the smooth phrases in the vocabulary of diplomacy cannot gainsay the fact of Russia's unflagging and persistent absorption of adjacent States. She stands on the confines of two continents, with one sword pointed at Constantinople, another

to the Persian Gulf, and a third to India. Her ambition expands as her frontier advances. At one time it is the Crimea; at another the Pruth; then the Danube; and now in fact although not nominally, the Balkans. In another direction, her outposts were, in the lifetime of many now living, on the Don, then on the Caucasus, now at Batoum and Kars. Her dominion was, a generation ago, bounded by the Caspian, then it was pushed to the Oxus, and now it reaches to Afghanistan and China. She aspires to be the chief gendarme of Asia, and would plant in every corner of that continent a musket or a spy. It is this Power, the friend of all re-action and the foe of all freedom—the very existence of which is an absolute negation of the principle of nationalities, that is hovering on our Indian frontiers. Her Cossacks are on the Heri Rud, and her engineers beyond Kizil Arvat. She says she has no designs on Afghanistan—but she said the same thing about Khiva, Merv, and a score of other places. We believed her, we were deceived, and we know what has happened. When her railway is complete, and her troops are ready, she will resume her stereotyped tactics—pick a quarrel with the Afghans, and use that quarrel as a justification for an attack on Herat. When she does this, we will be bound to protect it. Every conquerer of India has secured, first, Merv, and the oasis on the lower course of the Murghab, and then Herat.

The Ameer is our feudatory. We pay him £120,000 a year, and provide him with arms and ammunition. He permits us to control his foreign policy, and we have engaged to sustain his authority. We do not want Afghan territory; but we do want to keep the Russians out of it. And for this all-sufficient reason. If the Russian and British dominions become conterminous, it will require a capital expenditure of from twenty to thirty millions to put the frontier in a

as patrols. A line of fortresses was to be built; a railway was to be laid to Quetta; and Candahar was to be put under a friendly Vali. This was the scientific frontier theory which was assented to by Yakoob Khan, and embodied in the treaty of Gandamak. The idea was to sustain Afghanistan on the basis of the arrangement made by Lord Dalhousie with Dost Mahomet in 1855, but not to bind us to maintain the ruling or any succeeding Ameer. We were to aid the Afghans, but not to put ourselves in their power. We could defend the new frontier, if need be, against the Russians and Afghans combined, and we were under no obligation to fight for any Afghan fortress or territory. The late Government reversed this policy, abandoned the new frontier, pulled up the railway and other defensive preparations, gave Abdur-Rahman a more liberal allowance, and entered into more binding engagements for the support of his authority. If the Russians had kept their bargain, this treaty might have worked out satisfactorily enough; but they did not, and the Liberal Ministry realized, when too late, the onerous character of the obligations they had contracted with the Afghans, and the untrustworthiness of the Russian professions. The abandoned railway works were resumed; another line through the Bolan Pass was projected; a chain of fortresses designed, and troops and war material hurried to Quetta—all very commendable work. The only regret is that it was not done before, and that the defences initiated by Lord Lytton were discontinued. The present Government are energetically carrying out the intentions of their predecessors, and amplifying them. It is a race whether our railway shall reach Candahar, or the Russians shall reach Herat first.

Our Afghan policy, therefore, is now a national one. Afghanistan is the only entrance to India that is open. If it is forced, that marvellous monument of

English skill and courage, of enterprise and endurance—British India—will fall. Alexander's empire passed away in a blast of mutiny; the Mogul went out in a convict ship; the Portuguese crept stealthily away; and the Dutch perished for very greed. If the English goes down, it should be with torn sheets and battered sides, but with colours flying, and every man at his post. I must apologise for troubling you with such a mass of figures, but they were essential to my argument, which is that, whatever may be our opinion as to the way India was won, there can be no disagreement as to the wisdom and necessity of our holding it now that we have it. We must do this for the sake of the natives, of ourselves, and of civilization. To do so, we must guard its frontiers and its approaches. The only vulnerable point is the north-west frontier, and that is menaced by Russia. We must defend it, if need be, with all the strength of the Empire.

XVI.—EGYPT AND THE WEST AND SOUTH AFRICAN COLONIES.

Speech delivered during the General Election, in the Byker Board School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, November 23rd, 1885.

Have you ever enquired how the politicians who attained power as the opponents of territorial aggression, and the friends of peace, should have involved the country in one of the most unprovoked, sanguinary, and costly military adventures of modern times? Their professions, and their practices, can only be reconciled on the hypothesis that deeds are good or evil according to the persons who commit them. Evidently war, in the judgment of the late Ministers, is odious and sinful when originated by one set of men, but honourable and virtuous when originated by another. This may be so, but, if it is, I have a very incorrect conception of Christian morality. The attitude of the public, during the course of the deplorable events in Egypt, may be explained by the systematic indifference with which they regard all foreign complications until we are involved in them. It usually happens that, by the time the constituencies have mastered the matters in dispute, the Ministry of the day have committed the country to a definite course. The question is then fought out on strictly party lines. Remonstration is unavailing, and reason is denied a hearing. If the people had heeded the warning, and acted on the counsel plentifully tendered when the trouble in Egypt was brewing, they would have been saved the sad and mournful story of the past

five years. But they would not listen, and they have had to pay for their temerity. When the Cabinet had our fleet roving the Eastern waters, ostentatiously brandishing their arms before Dulcigno, as they afterwards did with such direful effect before Alexandria, they were told that this naval roystering might go a step too far, and that Mussulman fanaticism might be roused to reprisals. But all such sober caution was set down to partizan malice or spite at the late Prime Minister. If there are any here who can carry their minds back to the naval promenade in the Adriatic five years ago, recall what I, along with others, said about it, and compare the predictions then made with what has since occurred, they will allow that the protest was prompted by something else than partizan malevolence. A course calculated to produce like embroilments has been pursued, unnoticed, in Afghanistan. The Liberals objected to the action of Lord Beaconsfield in that country, and reversed it. In doing so, however, they have committed us to engagements much more onerous, as they will find when we are called upon, as we can be with our Treaty with Abdur-Rahman, to defend, not the Passes of the Sulimans, but the whole of wild Afghanistan.

But it was a party bargain, and scarce a voice has been raised against it. I know all protestations would have been unavailing. The part of Cassandra is an unpleasant one for a man to play. It makes others uncomfortable, and himself unpopular. People detest, and usually resent, being told of impending peril. It is, too, impossible to induce a busy community, swayed by a thousand different and conflicting interests, to give continuous attention to the multitudinous and complicated questions that our relations with other states are constantly raising. They don't know what has been devised in the diplomatic laboratories, and, in despair, they surrender themselves to the guidance of professional leaders. Professional poli-

ticians, like professional cricketers, have only one object—to win their game. They do not commit themselves until they see, or think they see, which course is best for the party to take; and then they will do anything with the game but lose it. National interests are made subservient to sectional and irrelevant considerations. Thus, between the indifference of the public and the schemes of party chiefs, the country staggers into war, or engagements that lead to war, much as a drunken man staggers into a ditch without knowing it. If the people had dispassionately investigated the initial stages of the Egyptian dispute, the Ministry would never have been permitted to oscillate into the embroglio in which they have landed themselves and England. We cannot recall the past, but we may extract from it guidance for the future. The disturbing influences which have caused so much misery, bloodshed, and perplexity, have disappeared. Arabi and the nationalist leaders are in exile. The Mahdi and his able lieutenant are dead. So, too, is the heroic Gordon, as well as the Government that despatched him on his chivalrous but bootless mission. Egypt is bankrupt, and our army has returned vanquished, but not dishonoured. The followers of the Egyptian patriot, and of the Soudanese prophet, are bewailing their fate in dismantled homes and decimated families. The most vivid imagination cannot depict the sickening reality of our desert butcheries. The patient work of generations—agriculture, commerce, progress—has been sacrificed to fanatical credulity and political vacillation and indecision. Egypt ruined, the Soudan abandoned to slavery and savagedom, England discredited —these are the trophies of British intervention.

Now, when the centres of the opposing forces have played their parts, and have vanished, we may inquire what object we had in going to Egypt. The caucus Liberal, who buys his opinions as he buys his dinner, ready cooked,

will tell you that the root of the evil lay in the Dual Control, which Lord Salisbury and M. Waddington concocted, and bound their respective countries to uphold. The statement is not correct. If the Dual Control was obligatory on us, it was also so on the French. They did not sustain it by force of arms, and we need not have done so unless we liked. But let that pass. Admit that the Anglo-French bargain carried all the obligations it is credited with, why did we enter into it? If the Control caused the war, what caused the Control? That is the question. There is a reason for most things, and there will be for this amongst others. What was it? British interests are not a sentimental, but a substantial reason. We are interested in Egypt, because a large number of our countrymen have heavy investments, and do a large business there. Lord Beaconsfield defined foreign affairs to be the affairs of Englishmen living in foreign countries. The affairs of Englishmen, living in, or connected with, Egypt, led our Government, as the affairs of Frenchmen led the French Government, to organise the Dual Control. Whether it was a wise or unwise arrangement, I am not now discussing. I am only explaining its origin.

Egypt has been the brightest jewel in the crown of many a conqueror—the objective point which, in the internecine struggles of the East, all have striven to gain. Xerxes, Alexander, Ptolemy, Augustus, Saladin, and Napoleon, each, in turn, devoted their bravest legions and untiring energy to its conquest. Bonaparte told the French Directory that, by seizing and holding Egypt, he could command the destinies of the civilised world. Its geographical position has destined it to be a great commercial emporium. Historians and political philosophers have discoursed eloquently on its natural resources, and on the power its possession confers. One of its eulogists points out how, being placed in the centre between Europe

and Asia, on the confines of Eastern and Western civilization, at the extremity of the African Continent, and on the shores of the Mediterranean, it is fitted to become the central point of communication for the varied productions of these different regions of the globe. The waters of the Mediterranean bring it all the fabrics of Europe; the Red Sea wafts to its shores the riches of India and China; while the Nile floats down to its bosom the produce of the vast unknown regions of Africa. Its influence on the mercantile relations of Great Britain are only realised when a sudden rupture of the ordinary flow of events impresses its value on us. Egypt proper, consisting of the Delta and the Nile valley up to the first cataract, covers 216,000 square miles, or about the same superficies as the German Empire. It contains five-and-a-half million natives, and ninety thousand Europeans. This population is confined to nine or ten thousand square miles, the other being desert. On this space the inhabitants are very densely packed. In Belgium, there are 486 persons to the square mile, and in Great Britain there are 291; but in the Egyptian Delta there are 598 persons per square mile, or about one per acre. This does not include the floating population, of which, in times of peace, there is nearly half-a-million more. The country is agricultural and not manufacturing. It has no adventitious supplies of gold or iron, of silver or petroleum, to depend on; yet, it is as rich in food as when Jacob sent his ten sons there to buy corn. It exports, as the product of the soil and the fruit of its labours, £2 7s. 6d. per head of the population—a remarkable amount, proving not only the fertility of the land, but the industry of the people. Of the thirteen million pounds worth of goods Egypt exported the year before the war, England took over nine millions; all the rest of the world taking only four. Of the six and three-quarter million pounds' worth of foreign goods Egypt bought, England

sold three and a quarter millions, and India and Australia onc and a-quarter millions; all the rest of the world selling her only two-and-a-half-millions. Putting the import and export trades together, England does sixty-two per cent. of it; India and the colonies seven per cent.—in all, sixty-nine per cent.; while France does thirteen per cent., Austria six per cent., Italy seven, and Russia five per cent. There are no data to show what amount of English money is invested in Egypt, nor what share of the loans is held by English capitalists. But the sums are considerable; and these, taken together with our trade, give us a paramount interest in the country.

But large though these interests undeniably are, their being imperilled would not supply sufficient warrant for war. When our merchants and money-lenders speculate, they do so at their own risk. Although the Government are bound to ensure them justice, and prevent them being robbed, they are not bound to fight to make good the losses that come to them in the ordinary course of commerce. We did not occupy the territory of the South American Republics when they became insolvent, and we would not interfere in Holland if our large business with that country were damaged by internal disturbances. Our position in Egypt, it is true, is peculiar, as we are largely responsible for the form of Government that exists there. It is mainly our creation. But although our share in the reconstitution of Egypt, under the rule of Mehemet Ali, has often been cited as a pretext for our subsequent interference, neither it, nor our trading connection, justifies intervention by arms, though both may be rightly regarded as buttressing our other interests. The first of these other interests is the Suez Canal, of which we own half the shares, and contribute 80 per cent. of the traffic. On Thursday, I showed, or at least tried to show, how essential to our Indian

Empire was the maintenance of our command of the Canal. It is the great toll-gate between the East and the West; and it is imperative, for both trading and strategical reasons, that we should have control over it. Comparing it with the Cape route to Bombay, nearly five thousand miles are saved—an all-important consideration in the event of a disturbance in India. Egypt supplied the land through which it was cut; France cut it; and England sustains it. If it were not for our trade, it would relapse into the abandoned state which destroyed the ancient channels of the Pharaohs and the Caliphs. We are the carriers of the world. More than half the tonnage of the globe is owned by England. Our carrying trade is the backbone of the maritime supremacy upon which we depend for our prosperity, our power, if not our existence, as an independent nation. If we had not a single colony, we should have an interest in the Canal superior to that of any other Power, or rather superior to that of all the other Powers put together. But, in addition to this, England is the centre of a vast empire, most of whose possessions lie in the Eastern seas, to which the Canal gives access. Our material and political interests in the East are so overwhelmingly predominant, that they give us a right to a position distinct from, and superior to, that of any other nation. It is unnecessary, after what I have already said, to enlarge further on this head. All the facts I have stated, and others equally cogent, can be verified by reference to maps, histories, and trade-registers.

These are our trade and political interests. They are weighty, but not so weighty as the military and the national. We are as much concerned to prevent Egypt passing under the dominion of France as we are to prevent Afghanistan passing under the dominion of Russia. If France or any great state were in possession of Egypt, it would constitute a menace to India, and a danger to our

Indian colonies. Conceive what power France would have, if, in addition to her existing authority in the Mediterranean, she held Egypt, occupied Mecca, and controlled the Red sea. She would drop the portcullis on our armies, as well as on our ships. The same objection there is to Russia becoming master of Constantinople, controlling the Straits, and converting the Euxine into a naval dockyard, arsenal, and harbour of refuge, applies to France becoming master of Egypt, controlling the Canal, and seizing the Red, as the Russians would seize the Black Sea. France, in such a position could make descents on India with a compact force of Frenchmen and Arabs; and her cruisers, using the Red Sea as a shelter, could imperil our Eastern commerce, or make its safety dependent on the caprice of boulevard chauvinists. Russia, on our Indian borders, would force us into a heavy military expenditure; France, in Egypt, would force us into equally great naval expenditure. If this took place, we should never have any true peace with the French, any more than we have with the Russians. There would be an armed truce on both sides. There is one difference between the two Powers. Russia cannot invade us at home; France can. We no more want Egypt than we want Afghanistan, or we want Constantinople; but we do want all these places in the possession of the native populations—Afghans, Egyptians, and Turks respectively.

Our interests in Egypt, as investors and traders, and as owners of an Eastern Empire, combined to induce our Government to enter into the Dual Control, as they combined to induce it, half-a-century ago, to limit the powers of Mehemet Ali, and to re-impose the authority of the Porte. If the intervention of 1882 is the product of the Control, the Control is the product of the intervention of 1840, as that was, in its turn, the outcome of the invasion of 1801, when we drove out the French and restored the

rule of the Sultan. Partizan criticism has obscured, rather than explained, British policy in Egypt. But, although occasionally erratic, this policy has had but one object throughout—Egypt for the native or the Turks, or the two jointly, but not for us or any great Power. Disorder injures trade. Anarchy destroys it. Being so closely identified with Egypt, as an outlet for British capital, a field for British enterprise, as a road to British possessions, and a possible base of hostile operations against us, our Governments have always busied themselves in its administration—often by advice, sometimes by command. This explains why the late Khedive, when his finances got into confusion in 1875, sought counsel from England. At his request, the late Mr. Cave was sent to examine into the position of the country. Mr. Cave reported that there had been great waste and systematic extravagance; that great works had been undertaken with insufficient means; that there had been heavy losses by colonial adventures; and excessive military expenditure. He recommended the intervention of a superior Power to restore credit, and restrain expenditure. This report led up to the scheme of liquidation, which Mr. Goschen for the English, and M. Joubert for the French creditors, after some delay, and much difficulty, succeeded in organizing, and which was ultimately put in operation under the joint control of France and England. Before this was accomplished, Ismail had to sell his shares in the Canal, and the English Government bought them for under four million pounds—a most profitable purchase. But these and other personal sacrifices were not sufficient to restore confidence in Ismail, who, on the recommendation of the great Powers, was deposed by the Sultan; and Tewfik, whom his father describes as being without head, heart, or courage, with limited income and restricted powers, was appointed Khedive in his place.

Although Ismail was extravagant, he was able. He found the Egyptian debt fifteen millions, and he left it twenty-seven. But he also found the revenue four and a half millions, and left it nine. He found the tilled area four million acres, and he left it five and a half million acres. He found the trade five and a half million pounds, and he left it nineteen millions. He attempted too much, but he was, nevertheless, the ablest Mahometan ruler there has been since Mehemet Ali. Egypt was robbed. There is no other word which correctly describes what was done by the money-lenders and their agents. Out of sixty-nine millions borrowed, in eleven years, Egypt got under forty-three millions; twenty-six millions being illicitly abstracted in its passage to the Egyptian treasury. Interest had to be paid for what was really never received. By the scheme of liquidation, the debt was fixed at eighty millions. The revenue was estimated at £8,400,000. Of this amount, £3,565,000 was set aside for the payment of the debt annuities, and £4,825,000 was left for the expenses of government, for the Suez Canal interest, and other liabilities.

It was over this arrangement that all the trouble arose. It was to upset it that Arabi and his countrymen rebelled. The scheme itself was not opposed. It was only fair that Egypt should pay her debts, and the people made no objection to that; but they did object, ultimately with arms, to the manner in which the scheme was carried out. Instead of entrusting the natives with some share of the work, every branch of the service was crammed with Europeans, many of whom were sinecurists. In 1881, there were 1,324 Europeans in various posts, drawing in salaries an aggregate of £373,700 a year, or 4 per cent. on the gross revenues of the country. This was even too much for the long-suffering fellaheen. It was against this flagrantly unjust arrangement and not against the honest payment of all

liabilities that Arabi rose; and without approving of all he did, the motive that prompted him and his countrymen was commendable, and such as Englishmen, in like circumstances, would have been moved by. His plan of reform was that subsequently adopted by Lord Dufferin, and to the enactment of which the late Government were pledged. It was at this juncture that, in my judgment, the Liberal Cabinet made their fatal and irredeemable error. I agree with them as to our special and preponderating interest in Egypt. I agree that it was our duty to ensure its maintenance. I disagree with their meddling in a legitimate effort, on the part of the Egyptian people, to collect and administer their own revenue, when the conditions of the liquidation were complied with, the interest paid, and the stipulated sum for the redemption of the debt honestly apportioned for that purpose. When this was done, all was done that we could rightfully ask for; and that it was done we have the statements of members of the late Ministry, notably that made by the late Premier himself, at Leeds, in the autumn of 1881. What was it to us whether Arabi was, or was not, president of the Khedive's Council, as long as the Government were sustained and its bargains kept? The main difference between Arabi and the others was that Arabi was an honest soldier, and they were either puppets or speculators, to whose fingers many of the missing millions had stuck. It is notorious that some of our "protégés," from being very poor men, became very rich ones during their years of office under Ismail. Arabi, on the other hand, had the power to enrich himself, and he did not do so. We had a right to insist on compliance with the conditions of the liquidation. We had no right to allow personal prejudice against Arabi to prevent his becoming president. But if there was a rebellion—and there would not have been if Arabi and his friends had been allowed to retain office—we should have

called upon the Sultan, as suzerain, to repress it. It was no part of our duty to bombard Alexandria, because our nominee as president was not selected.

I have dwelt at length on the inception of the intervention, as in it is to be found the key to what followed. The principle is there. The rest is a matter of administration, or rather maladministration. Once started, events follow each other in natural order. Along with the French, we lodged an ultimatum against Arabi, but it was disregarded. Then the two Powers put themselves into fighting attitude, and prepared to enforce their demands. The French threatened and retired, but we fired. The Government were warned, by a battalion of authorities, that there would be an outburst of religious resentment; and they were pressed to send a force on shore to protect the European quarter of Alexandria. They treated the demand with disdain. What they were told would occur, did occur. Alexandria was burned, and many Europeans killed. Then we sent soldiers, but it was too late. The insurrection had got head. While a company of marines could easily have kept order, it took an army to restore it. We destroyed the Egyptian troops at Tel-el-Kebir and we destroyed with them the country's defence. When we vanquished Arabi, we opened a way for the Mahdi. Egypt had an India as well as England—a fact that our politicians did not then know. The Egyptian army having been annihilated, a hastily organised, undisciplined, and ill-provisioned force was despatched to the Soudan, and slaughtered. Again they were told of the risk they were running, and again they discarded the advice. They refused either to restrain the expedition or to strengthen it; and the gallant Hicks marched to his doom. Death rode on every passing breeze. Then we realised the situation. But it was once more too late. We sent Gordon alone to stem the rushing wave of Moslem fury. He did his work nobly,

but he failed, as every sane man outside of the Cabinet, who had ever thought on the subject seriously, knew he would do. We repeated with Baker, the blunder we made with Hicks, and with like disastrous consequences. Then we sent General Graham to relieve the garrisons which Baker never reached. Again too late! The garrisons were massacred before he got there. After lengthened hesitation, we attempted to rescue one of the most heroic servants any nation ever possessed, but we were once more too late. The Nile demonstration demonstrated nothing but the courage of our soldiers and the culpable vacillation of our statesman. When Gordon was killed we proclaimed a retaliatory campaign, and sent General Graham to Suakim with a composite army of navvies and soldiers to build a railway to Berber. Lord Wolseley proclaimed to the natives that we would go to Khartoum if it took us one hundred years; and, on the strength of this proclamation, he got the aid of friendly Arabs. But it was all bounce. We did not go to Khartoum, and we never laid the railway. We sent the ships with the railway plant back to Chatham, and we sent our native allies to their fate. And such a fate! There is not in all the chequered record of modern military adventure a more melancholy and humiliating chapter than that which chronicles the recklessness and timidity, the vacillation and weakness, the blunders and incapacity, of the British Government in Egypt. No language, however severe, can adequately describe the misery and chaos that their agglomeration of dissimilar aims and irreconcilable elements have produced. In no single instance did the Government show even ordinary skill. Their policy, both in the Council chamber and in the field, has been one unrelieved and colossal failure—a succession of responsibilities shirked, duties neglected, and opportunities missed. Millions have been squandered, thousands of people have been slaughtered, tens of thousands have been

ruined, and no human being has been benefited by all the bloodshed and waste. They stamped out the national rising and gave the country nothing in its place. They neither shut the door nor opened it, neither evacuated the country, nor ruled it.

It is a small satisfaction to me to say that I have had no part in the business. I opposed it from start to finish. I have re-told the dreary tale, not for the purpose of proving that I was right when other and abler men were wrong, nor with the expectation that its repetition will have the remotest influence on current politics. The country has condoned the blunders, and Parliament has endorsed them. Recriminations, therefore, are purposeless. But I wish to emphasise the necessity of the English people bestowing more attention on foreign questions when in the embryonic stage, and not allowing them to become an arena for party strife. Liberals disclaim against bloodshed; yet they originated a war in which there have been more persons slain than in any other English war this generation. They advocate economy; yet, they have buried in the sands of the Soudan more millions than they will save for the next fifty years. And all because the men who disapproved of the enterprise had not the courage to state their objection and vote against their party! And for the future—what can be said? We have added nine millions to the already all but unbearable Egyptian debt. That is the cost of our bombardment. It ought to have been paid by the men who ordered, and the men who sanctioned, the outrage. It is doubtful whether, with all the legal thumbscrews they can construct, the bondholders will be able to wring the increased taxes out of the hard-earned income of the long-suffering peasantry. If Egypt had difficulties in paying her way before, how can she pay it now with a heavier debt, with her society dislocated, her land ravished, her

cost of carriage from Berber to Suakim alone was from £8 to £12 a ton, and that nothing weighing under 500 lbs. could be carried in one parcel. It takes weeks for a boat to pass from Berber to Assouan; and yet, about 100,000 tons of merchandise finds its way annually by that route to Alexandria. The late Khedive commenced to make a railway from Berber to Suakim; but it was abandoned by the Liquidation. It will be made some day soon. One of the many blunders committed by the late Government in Egypt was in not leaving the railway plant at Suakim when they had it there. The line is certain to be constructed, either by the Government or by a private company. There would be no opposition to a railway from the Arabs, if they knew that it was only intended for trade purposes. The Hadendowas, the tribe through whose country it would pass, have keen trade instincts, and they know it would bring them cheaper goods and grain, and get them better prices for their skins and oil and ivory. But, even if they were at first unfriendly, the road could still be made, as the Western and Pacific Railways have been, through countries of fierce and daring warriors, possessed of what the Arabs have not—arms of precision. There were, before the Mahdi's victories, telegraphic and postal services all the way to El Obeid, and a network of forts up to and beyond Gondokora. These have been destroyed and it will be years before they are restored, and till the baleful effects of war are erased. But the gradual establishment of a regular Government, and the opening of easier and more rapid means of communication to profitable markets, will gradually stimulate trade, and, in time, it is to be hoped, obliterate the bitter recollections of the war. England may abandon the Soudan, but Egypt cannot. When resigning his Governorship, General Gordon told the Khedive that, although Lower Egypt was the head and chest of his kingdom, the Soudan was the belly. And his remark is true.

While the French are active in the North, the Germans are busying themselves in the West and East of Africa. Whoever else doubts the wisdom of a nation possessing colonies, Prince Bismarck does not. He is running round the world in search of islands and inlets to continents. Unless he belies his reputation, we will have trouble with him about the Zambesi as well as about the Cameroons. The Italians covet Tripoli, and the Spaniards Morocco; while the Portugese are re-asserting claims which they have long allowed to lie in abeyance on the Congo and the Zambesi. One of the most interesting colonial experiments in Africa is that originated by Mr. Stanley, and espoused so warmly by the King of the Belgians. It is a private association, with civilizing, but neither aggressive nor mercenary, objects. It seeks to promote unrestricted intercourse between whites and blacks, and unqualified free trade. It has already established five stations upon 278 miles of river and coast line. There is a regular means of communication between these stations; and the trade already done by them is worth three millions a year. Mr. Stanley calculates that when the Congo is fairly opened out, and the projects of the association are completely developed, there will be a trade with it of £50,000,000 a year. The amount is astounding, if not romantic; but the calculation seems warranted by what has already been achieved. He believes there will, in a few years, be 150 steamers and 240 sailing vessels plying between the Congo and Europe. In this trade, Englishmen are especially interested. Our old customers are leaving us. Some are getting supplied elsewhere, and others are turning manufacturers themselves. In India, for example, they are learning to make their own cottons very fast. Last year, India exported £16,000,000 worth of her own manufactures. She still is our best customer, but if her factories and coal mines develop, and English capital is invested in

them, her demand for our soft goods will certainly not increase. Our cotton exports are nearly stationary. If the trade is to be sustained and developed, we must find other outlets for it. When Lord Palmerston forced the opening of some of the China ports, the Lancashire manufacturers threw up their hats and exclaimed, "Let every one of the 300 millions of Chinamen buy a cotton night-cap and our machines will be in full work." I do not know whether all the Chinese did this or not; but Mr. Stanley, with more justification, calculates that if all the millions of inhabitants living in the Congo basin, who are now naked, were to supply themselves with loin cloths at the moderate price of 2d. per yard, it would create for the Lancashire people a trade amounting to £26,000,000 a year. This would be over one-third of our entire exports.

But the natives want other things besides cotton. They will barter their tropical products for all kinds of cutlery and hardware, as well as clothing. Such intercourse will banish the curse of Africa—the slave trade. It is calculated that about one million negroes, in a year, are driven into slavery from the district lying between the Red and Arabian Seas and the Atlantic. Dr. Livingstone calculated that not more than one slave in five arrived at his destination, and, on some routes, not more than one in nine. The others died on the road, from hardship and ill-treatment. This iniquitous and inhuman system cannot live alongside of British commerce. The efforts of all the explorers and trading organizations, from whichever side they start, converge on the territory known by the general name of the Soudan, which has a population roughly and variously estimated at from 80 to 180 million people. It is for contact with this vast region, where no good influence is superfluous, and where no co-operation should be disdained, that the natives of Europe are competing. They seek to serve a double purpose—to benefit themselves by business,

and benefit the people who have hitherto been outside civilization.

The British possessions on the West Coast of Africa are amongst the oldest we own. We have held Gambia for 250, the Gold Coast for 220, and Sierra Leone for over 100 years. In 1860, we got Lagos, and last year we assumed the protectorate of the basin of the Niger. The climate is not favourable for Europeans. The old nickname of Sierra Leone was the "white man's grave." But there is more prejudice than truth in the popular opinion as to its unhealthiness. The question of climate is one of carefulness and willingness to adapt yourselves to circumstances. Englishmen once died off rapidly in tropical districts, because they ate, drank and clothed themselves, in much the same way as they did at home. But wiser practices are now followed; and even along the low-lying coast of the Gulf of Guinea, our countrymen can and do live for years in excellent health. Our settlements there would be more correctly described as trading stations than colonies. They are planted at the entrance, or along the banks of rivers. We have treaties with the neighbouring chiefs, with whom our merchants exchange British manufactures for native produce. About £1,000,000 worth of British goods are sent to these settlements yearly, and their cost to the British Exchequer for government is about £50,000 a year. The North African Company, which is doing for English trade on the Niger much the same work that the East India Company did in India, and the Hudson Bay Company did in Canada, has stations nearly 500 miles inland. The Company's steamers ply regularly on the vast waterway with which the name of Mungo Park is so indissolubly associated. The land is rich and well cultivated. There are towns in the river valley with populations of from 10,000 to 60,000 people. Many of the native traders are wealthy; some possessing in coin ar

goods from £50,000 to £60,000. They have primitive but not ineffective methods of manufacture and agriculture, and they live in a class of dwellings very superior to those usually occupied by savages. They are favourably disposed to intercourse with the English, and, when treated as free people, possessing the inherent right to dispose of their own destinies, are willing to co-operate in the development of all measures needful for extending British influence into the interior.

The British possessions in South Africa, unlike those in the west, are veritable colonies. The climate is salubrious and invigorating. The physical features are very diversified. In some parts, Nature has distributed her gifts in profusion, and the landscape is as fair and picturesque as a realm in fairyland. In others, it is weird and desert-like. Corn and fruit are the chief objects of cultivation in the neighbourhood of the Cape, while farther north there is a magnificent grazing ground. There are rich deposits of copper, coal, and diamonds. Lead, gold, and silver, too, are found to an unknown extent. The Cape Colonies are amongst the most thriving and valuable we have. Our trade with them is large, and it is steadily and rapidly developing. In 1862, we sent them goods to the value of £1,900,000; in 1872, we exported them £3,700,000; and in 1882, £7,500,000. In twenty years, our Cape exports, therefore, have really quadrupled. Our exports to Australia and to India, in the same time, have doubled, and to Canada they have increased threefold. With no colony or foreign country have they risen so rapidly as to South Africa. We import goods nearly to the same amount as we export them—our total trade amounting to £14,360,000. This gives full employment for five lines of steamers, besides a number of sailing ships. Directly and indirectly, this tonnage employs a capital of £100,000,000 sterling. Our South African trade is capable

of almost indefinite extension. There is a large exportation of wool, and there will be, in time, an equally large exportation of cereals.

But, although profitable, the South African have been troublesome colonies. We have had two opponents to deal with—the Boers and the Kaffirs. They are both, like ourselves, aliens, although they each have been longer in the land than we have been. The Boers are descendants of the Dutchmen who landed at the Cape about 230 years ago. The Kaffirs are descendants of the warlike negroes, who found their way to the south, from the Equatorial regions, about the same time as the Dutch did from Europe. Between the two, the Aborigines have been all but exterminated. During the French war, in 1795, the Cape was taken by the English. It was afterwards restored to Holland, but finally ceded to this country at the Congress of Vienna, in 1814. The Boers never took kindly to British rule. They held upwards of 35,000 slaves, and a large number of Hottentots in a state of quasi-slavery. In 1835, in order to avoid compliance with the Slave Emancipation Act, and the restraints of British law, the Boers abandoned the Cape, and withdrew beyond its borders. Some settled in Natal, some on the Orange River, and some, subsequently, in the Transvaal. Wherever the Boers went, troubles followed like a shadow. Their career was marked by the massacre and spoliation of the native tribes, the slaughter of men and women alike, and the enslavement of children, their commanders being wanting in none of those ruthless features which characterized the slave hunts of the Arab traders in the Soudan. Our differences with them were compromised in 1852. We annexed Natal, but we recognized the independence of the Orange River and the Transvaal Settlements. The Boers agreed to sundry conditions, the chief being the abolition of slavery. The Orange Free State has kept the treaty made at the Sand

River; and our relations with it, under the enlightened rule of President Brand, have been agreeable and mutually advantageous. The Transvaal Republic has not, and its breach of bargain has involved its citizens, the natives, and ourselves in troubles the end of which cannot be foreseen.

The territory of the Republic is about half the size of France, and it contains a white population of 40,000—not many more than there are in Elswick Ward. The natives number about 800,000. Although the Boers bound themselves to abandon slavery, they did so only nominally. They call their slaves black ivory and their forced labour apprenticeship. By the fundamental law of the Republic, no native can purchase or hold land in his own name. There is no marriage laws for the blacks, and equality of persons of colour is not allowed either in Church or State. The natives can work in, but are not allowed to reside in, towns. They are compelled to herd in what are called locations, where not only the virtues, but the decencies, of civilization are over-ridden. To these locations they are called by a curfew-bell, and natives found outside their boundaries after nine at night are imprisoned. For these encampments they are required to pay a heavy hut-tax. Such laws and treatment do not commend Boers' rule to the natives within the boundaries of the Republic; while the filibustering organized by Transvaal desperadoes, if not with the sanction, at least without the disapproval, of the Government, brought them into open conflict with the neighbouring tribes. Gangs of men, armed with deadly weapons, organize themselves in buccaneering expeditions, make raids on the native kraals, burn the huts, shoot the adults, carry away captive the young people, seize the cattle, grain, and other stores of the unsuspecting and unoffending villagers, and then march home singing songs f triumph in which are blasphemous ascriptions of praise

to God for success in their diabolical enterprises. Occasionally, some of the raiders stay on the sites of the demolished kraals, and occupy the farms of the murdered natives. Such proceedings provoke reprisals. It would not be reasonable to suppose that a million of brave blacks would submit, without resistance, to such aggression and violence. The enraged tribes made a formidable attack on the Boers in 1875 and 1876, and beat them. The commerce of the Republic was well nigh destroyed; the Government was bankrupt; and the Boers, discontented and divided, threatened with internal discord and external attacks, appealed to the British Government for aid. It was given, and the territory taken over in 1877. For three years it was held and administered by the British. During these three years the military despotism of Cetywayo and the power of formidable chiefs like Seco-cœni were broken. The Boers, freed by the action of this country from the fear of attack, then demanded to be relieved from British control. We refused the request, and the late Government went to war to keep the country; but, after our defeat at Majuba Hill, terms of peace were settled, by which self-government was restored to the Transvaal, so far as regards internal affairs; the control and management of its external affairs being reserved to the Queen as suzerain. The terms of this Convention have been violated repeatedly by the Boers. Wanton and brutal attacks have been made on the native chiefs who aided us.

With a view to seeing justice done to our native allies, the late Government sent Sir Charles Warren with a powerful force to Bechuanaland. He has restored peace, asserted the rights of the natives, vindicated the claims of justice, and done much to prevent unjust aggres
robbery hereafter. 'Alarmed at our Commissi
cision and promptitude, the Boers aban
eering protégés, and readily accep

required. We will see whether they will keep it. The Boers profess to be republican. Yet they have not the faintest idea of liberty. Intellectually, they are barren, and they are destitute of all tenderness and enthusiasm. They are uncultured and unprogressive. They are domestic but not gregarious. A Boer's idea is to have a farm so large that he will need to get on a tower, and use a telescope, to see his neighbour's house. He is stubborn and very pious. But he does not display much of the spirit of Christ in any of his dealings, especially with those dependent on him. Sir Charles Warren, at the instance of the late Government, assumed the protectorate of the territory known as Bechuanaland. It is larger than Spain. This was done with the sanction of all, and in some instances at the request of the native chiefs. Heretofore, the freebooters have first harried, then preyed upon, and then demoralized the natives. We have taken measures which, if carried out, will prevent such proceedings. There will be room for European settlers, and they will be welcomed, but they will not be allowed to despoil the natives. The country abounds in minerals, gold being especially abundant. The Boers say it is the best land in Africa, and, to vindicate their opinion, they named one of their robber republics Goshen, the land of fertility and fleshpots. Grass and patches of arable land are interspersed with belts of well-grown timber. Water is abundant, and there are ample facilities for irrigation. It is situated on the great backbone of Africa, and is, for the most part, a plateau of from 4,000 to 6,000 feet above the sea level, and extremely healthy for Europeans. Khama, the Kaffir king, and his chiefs, who have throughout their negotiations with Sir Charles Warren shown a shrewdness and discretion that would do credit to European negotiators, and who trust England, besought our Commissioner to extend our protectorate to the Zambesi, which Khama says

is the boundary of his dominions. He has set apart a piece of country for himself and people, and has placed the rest of the land at the disposal of English emigrants. The only condition that he stipulates for—and it ought to entitle him to be made a vice-president of the United Kingdom Alliance—is a law prohibiting the importation of strong drink into his country. The last addition to our Colonial Empire is the largest made for many years. It is of exceptional interest, and likely to be of exceptional value. It will keep open the great trade route to the centre of Africa; and, if the reports as to its riches are to be trusted, it may turn out a second California or Victoria.

The filibusters, driven from Bechuanaland, are now commencing their depredations in Zululand. They foment native disputes; they help one section against another; and end by dispossessing both sides, and taking the lands themselves. We have assumed the protectorate of St. Lucia Bay and the Zulu coast; and it requires not much foresight to predict that we will be driven to extend it to the entire country. The Transvaal is made a base for these operations. Although the Boer Government may not support them, they do not, or they cannot, stop them. While the Orange State is free of debt, and peaceful and prosperous, the Transvaal, for the second time, is insolvent, and almost as disturbed as before the annexation in 1877. This is to be regretted, as the country has great natural resources. Coal and gold, silver and iron, have all been found, and require only a settled Government to enable them to be worked. The Eastern boundary of the Republic is not more than fifty miles from Delagoa Bay, one of the finest harbours in the world, and the natural depôt for all the trade of Central-Eastern Africa. A railway between Pretoria and Delagoa Bay has been projected, and concessions securing a monopoly of traffic for ninety-nine years have been obtained.

The primary, and by far the most pressing, question in South Africa is how to deal with the natives. There will be a good deal of pushing and shouldering between the Dutch and ourselves; but, in the end, each party will fall into its proper place. But with the natives the problem is different and more difficult. There are, in round numbers, about 2,000,000 natives in our colonies. How many more we will be brought into immediate relation with, in consequence of the responsibilities we have assumed in Bechuanaland, I do not know; but it is a moderate calculation to put them at a million. The tribes, both within and beyond our boundary, do not melt away as the American Indians do, before the presence of white men, nor do they show signs of decadence like the Maoris. The primitive races, it is true, are about extinct; but the Kaffirs, who are divisible into various branches, are extremely prolific. In half a century they will number from eight to ten millions at least. How are we to make them members of a civilized community? That is the problem we have to solve. The Zulus have much of the ferocity of savages; but they have many faculties that, under kind and considerate management, might become virtues. The Fingoes, the Galekoes, and Basutos are gradually acclimatising themselves to civilized ways. So, too, are the Bechuanas—Dr. Livingstone's favourites. But the process of changing the character of ignorant and semi-savage races is but slow and difficult. The most effective factors in the work of civilization have been individual ownership in land, independent personal liberty, and the acceptance of Christianity as a rule of life. Although our progress has not been rapid, it has been decidedly encouraging. We must persevere. What may ultimately be evolved out of the ferment of adverse races and nationalities it would be rash to predict; but, if the soverign rule of England withdrawn, there will be a scramble, in which the

strongest, but not the best or wisest, will become masters. If we neglect the neighbourly duties and responsibilities incumbent on a rich, enlightened, and powerful nation towards poor, barbarous border tribes; if we allow peoples capable of permanent advancement and civilization to grow in numbers, while they fester in barbarism, we lay the foundation for inevitable wars. If we shut our eyes, and turn our backs on their wants and defects; leave them to themselves; endeavour to see and know as little of them, and let them know and see as little of us as possible, we need not be surprised to find that they grow aggressive and dangerous. The late Government incurred a great but honourable responsibility when they took over the civil and military administration of Bechuanaland. The responsibility we have accepted must be fulfilled. It would be mean and humiliating to evade our duties; and, unless we are prepared to abandon the colonies altogether, it would be ruinous. We cannot be indifferent to what is going on around us. Sir Charles Warren's expedition has cost more than a million pounds. If we had acted promptly it would not have cost £50,000. We should have a Minister charged with the direction of native affairs, empowered to deal with frontier difficulties as they arise, and before they work themselves into a knot that can only be cut by the sword. We might, in this way, save such costly enterprises as we have too often had in South Africa.

What is going on in Africa to-day is the counterpart of what went on in North America two centuries ago, and it will bring forth similar results. Our overflowing vitality will not allow a vast country, rich in beautiful scenery and natural resources, with a salubrious climate and fertile soil, with great navigable rivers and inland lakes, to be left in the control of tawny lions, long-eared elephants, and negro fetish worshippers. The African continent will, in time, be occupied by a mighty nation of English descent,

and covered with populous cities, flourishing farms, with railways and telegraphs, and all the other devices of civilization. The burthen of the argument that runs through this, as through all my other addresses, is that there is a promise of almost illimitable usefulness and grandeur lying before our colonists, and ourselves in unison with them—that their possession has imposed upon us duties which we cannot neglect or ignore without suffering the penalties which would form the fitting punishment of selfishness and indifference. No empire ever treated its dependencies with the same consideration and liberty as England does hers. We have granted absolute self-government to every colony in which the elements of self-government exist. We help them much, and control them very little. If we are true to the position and privileges we possess, we have before us the glorious destiny of working from an unapproachable vantage-ground for the regeneration of human kind in every quarter of the globe, and of indefinitely extending the dominion of freedom and the boundaries of civilization.

XVII.—THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

Speech delivered at the Mayoral Banquet, in the Assembly Rooms, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, June 26th, 1897 (Diamond Jubilee Celebrations).

This was the last time Joseph Cowen spoke in public.

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,—I have to ask you to drink to the prosperity of the British Empire. There have been empires which have covered a larger area, and some which have possessed a greater population, but there have been none at once so dissimilar and yet so correlative, so scattered and yet so cohesive. There have been races who have rivalled us in refinement, but none in practical ability. Greece, where the human intellect flowered with exceptional luxuriance, excelled us in the arts of an elegant imagination. But she was more ingenious than profound, more brilliant than solid. Rome was great in war, in government, and in law. She intersected Europe with public works, and her eagled legions extorted universal obedience. But her wealth was the plunder of the world; ours is the product of industry. The city states of ancient, and the free towns of mediæval times aimed more at commerce than conquest. Wherever a ship could sail or a colony be planted their adventurous citizens penetrated, but they sought trade more than territory. Phœnicia turned all the lines of current traffic towards herself. But she preferred the pleasant abodes of Lebanon and the sunlit quays of Tyre to organizing an empire. Arms had no part in her growth, and war no share in her greatness. Carthage, which, for a time,

counterbalanced Rome, robbed the ocean of half its mysteries, and more than half its terrors, but she did little to melt down racial antipathies. Venice in the zenith of her strength gathered a halo round her name which the rolling ages cannot dissipate. Holland, by her alliance of commerce and liberty, sailed from obscurity into the world's regard. Spain and Portugal drew untold treasure within their coffers, but its possession did not conduce to national virtue. None of these States, with their diverse qualities and defects, had imperial aspirations, except Spain. Most of them were only magnified municipalities. But the volume and value of their trade, although large for the time, was meagre when compared with ours. British wealth is unparalleled in commercial history. Add Carthage to Tyre, or Amsterdam to Venice, and you would not make another London. All things precious and useful, amusing and intoxicating, are sucked into its markets.

But mercantile success, although it implies the possession of self-reliance and self-control, of caution and daring, of discipline and enterprise, if unaccompanied by more elevated impulses, will not sustain a State. Wealth is essential. It must not, however, be wealth simply, but wealth plus patriotism. It is by the mingling of the material with the ideal, the aspiring with the utilitarian, that the British people have secured their influence and elasticity. These qualities have enabled them to dot the surface of the globe with their possessions, to rule with success old nations of every race and creed, and civilise new lands of every kind and clime. We owe much to our geographical position, which is well placed for both traffic and defence; something to our soil, which is fertile without being feculent; something to our climate, which is bracing, and yet not rigorous; something to our minerals and to the dexterous requisitioning of scientific and mechnical discoveries; and much to impregnating our tradi-

tional prudence with the spirit of advance, but most to our lineage and training. These have secured us freedom without turbulence, enabled us to escape from revolutionary disorders and reactionary repressions, and prompted us to extend to fresh populations the benefits of ancient order. It was the boast of the Athenians that they sprang from the earth they inhabited, and had never been contaminated by the admixture of ignoble blood. We cannot claim such Attic purity. The British are a composite and roving race. They derive their origin from distinctive nationalities. Movement is one of the factors of their progress, and they cannot be tied down to any territorial allocation. The Teutons, with their muscular activity and strenuous industry, supplied the basis of the national character, and fostered in us habits of local independence and self-government. The Norsemen, who came here as free-booters, and remained as settlers, are the core and sinew of our maritime population and the progenitors of our Blakes and Nelsons. The Celts, with their lively imaginations and their sympathetic natures, have imparted a strain of geniality to our hereditary gravity. This felicitous combination of contrarieties has endowed the British race with that subtle transmitting power which is essential to the grounding of an empire out of competitive elements. It has given us an interpenetrating force of great range, of many modes, of myriad personalities, which wear well, and fit us alike for law and liberty, trade and empire.

There are paradoxical patriots who tell us that the best way to manage an empire is to start from the principle that we have no interest in keeping it. They contend that modern territorial and military changes have altered our relative attitude to other powers, and modified our ancient status; that there is neither good to be got nor glory to be gained by our busying ourselves about the balance of power, or by taking a supererogatory [illegible] ntinental

disputes. They would have us to cease to be members of the European Areopagus, and become as insular in our sympathies as in our situation. Such selfish exclusiveness would be inconsistent with our immemorial polity. Once we stood forth as liberators, and always threw our influence, and often our sword, into the scale of people struggling to be free. We encouraged and subsidized neighbouring nations during their periods of despondency and destitution. But we have retired from this gratuitous protectorship, and abandoned the pretension to restrain all the wicked, to defend all the weak, and guide all the foolish. Our later function has been educational. By example and advice, we have laboured to multiply the number of constitutionally-governed countries. Partly owing to our aid, and partly to our progress of political enlightenment, civilised peoples generally have, in ways which best suit themselves, taken their affairs into their own hands. Intervention in the internal concerns of other States being recognised as undesirable, and our mission as parliamentary propagandists being fulfilled, ought we not, it is asked, to rest and be thankful? Coveting no territory, and shrinking from all aggression, can we not enjoy our leisure and let the world drift? We cannot, unless we are prepared to sink into the silence and inertia of a fifth-rate power and die of ennui like the bees in Mandeville's fable. Multiplied experience proves that mercantile states are unable to compete with great continental communities unless they have a broad territory, a free population, an imperial ideal, and adequate naval and military power. The maintenance of our commerce is involved in the maintenance of our dominion. Political isolation and commercial intercourse are incompatible. National sentiment as well as trade follows the flag. If one goes, both go. Our Empire is not the work of a single conqueror, but is the product of personal, prolonged, and spontaneous effort. We have

held it through ages of adverse possession. It has plunged us into many wars, it has often strained our resources, and it requires forecasting and potential statesmanship to guard it against dangers and preserve its integrity. But it is worth the effort. We get ample material return for the service. Official statistics prove this. Figures, however, cannot take in everything. These islands could not sustain so large a population, or find employment for so vast a capital if they stood alone. Even if they could it would be craven to abandon the obligations of our position. There is a moral responsibility attaching to such an inheritance, although some of it may have come as the spoil of marauding, or the price of profligacy. We have it, and must hold it, not for the satisfaction of being formidable, but for the necessity of being free. We can only do this by continuing to display the puissant patriotism that has won it. If a nation admits itself impotent, or announces that under no circumstances will it resist attack or repel insult, it will first be despised, and then trodden on by envious rivals. The spirit of a people cannot languish without dimming the lustre of its genius, and losing the force of its character. We desire peace, but are prepared for any danger which honour and duty compel us to risk. Great work requires great effort, and great effort is the essence of life. Milo began his athletic training with carrying a calf just weaned. By doing so every day he imperceptibly acquired sufficient strength to carry a full-grown ox. As with a man, so with a nation. The greater the tax upon its powers, the more the powers develop and the more easy becomes the pressure. Remove the strain, relax the endeavour, and loss of strength follows the collapse of exertion.

In our Colonies we have all the conditions required for strength and greatness, and all the seeds of a gigantic destiny. They supply us with markets for our merchan-

dise, outlets for our surplus population, a healthy incentive for enterprise and immeasurably over-pay the cost and peril of their defence. They enjoy all the privileges, and are liable to none of the burdens of British citizenship. We help them liberally, and control them inappreciably—acting towards them like a guardian who bears much, exacts little, and bleeds freely. We respect them as children more than we prize them as customers. They have a confident faith in their own future and a deep affection for the mother country, and the institutions that symbolise and strengthen the connection with her. We cannot abandon them with cynical indifference to their security and welfare. If we do, we will replace loyal subjects by indignant foes. But the most remarkable monument of the ruling power of the British people is in India. We did not covet its conquest. Part of it fell to our lot; other parts were forced upon us by the irresistible sequence of events. We have there a field of absolute duty and prospective usefulness that will task the grandest energies and satisfy the loftiest ambition. We are lords paramount over a number of mutually hostile races, who, but for us, would be ceaselessly at war. They have always had alien masters, and we are incomparably the best they have ever had. They are wayward and bigoted, with inveterate and incurable peculiarities. We have to control without offending them. We have to imbue torpid Orientals with Western energy; and, as the Bishop has just told us, by a judicious mingling of sympathy and firmness, we are doing so. British public spirit is apparent in every improvement and foremost in every enterprise—helping directly in some things, indirectly in others, and creating healthy emulation everywhere. There is no record in history of political supremacy and intellectual pre-eminence being exercised with such ubiquitous beneficence, such administrative adaptability. In the treble capacity of law-givers, teachers,

and allies, we are blending inherently different civilisations and promoting the progressive prosperity of both. Censorious critics contend that the reflex influence of India upon the Empire is detrimental—that the injuries of the conquered are being avenged by the moral effect they produce upon the conquerors. But our position there is not that of a foreign oppressor. By all the laws of international ethics we have a right to be where we are and to be as we are. We are expiating wrongs by benefits. We have put order in the place of anarchy, we have given protection by law instead of oppression by the sword, and we have enabled the people to dwell in freedom and safety, where of old each man was beaten down beneath whoever was stronger than himself.

Another school of political advisers exclaim against our converting subordinate races into rivals in trade and equals in power. As we cannot arrest their expansion, and as we are guided in our policy by the statistics of opinion, we must—so it is argued—in order to bring our action into harmony with our professions, concede to impulsive and irrational people what they ask for and not what they need, thus imperilling our own authority and circumscribing European industry. There is a substratum of truth in this premonition. Physical qualities count for much, for the welfare of humanity is involved in the production of permanence of the best. And higher races have sometimes been submerged by the greater spawning force of inferiors. But British individuality has heretofore been proof against such deterioration. We assimilate, but are not assimilated; we are easily acclimatised, but difficult to naturalise. We can, too, differentiate, and do not attempt to wind up all our clocks with a single key, nor set those at the Antipodes by the minute hand of St. Paul's. We have great mobility and retrieving power, and administer with facility the codes and creeds of every fraternity. By

the rough training of necessity, and the rapture of struggle and victory, the national character has been strengthened, and the Empire kept from the fatal declivity down which others have fallen. Will it endure? Ah! there's the rub!

The empires of antiquity, great as were their achievements, and splendid as were their promises, have vanished like passing pageants. The renounced seats of Assyrian and Babylonian magnificence have crumbled away. Thebes, with its towering obelisks, colossal sphinxes, and granite-hewn gods—old Homer's wonders—is a wonder still, but it is a wonder of desolation. The Parthenon, in ruined majesty, still looks down from its monumental hill to the classic harbour where Themistocles' little fleet anchored before it broke the proud power of Persia. But the glory that was Greece, and the grandeur that was Rome have gone, glimmering through the dream of things that were. They are little more now than faded verbal memories. The owl screams at night amid the mouldering columns of the Temple of Minerva—may not, to utilise Shelley's figure, the bittern some day boom amid the swamps that surround the shapeless towers of Westminster Abbey? History seems to postulate such a presentiment. Civilisation has always oscillated, pendulum-like, between progress and retrogression. Nations, like individuals, have their youth, manhood, maturity, and decline. But if we were to dwell too long on our national culmination we might be tempted to fold our arms, and set sail, as Sertorius thought of doing, in quest of the Fortunate Isles where life is nothing more than lotus-eating. As a counterpoise to such enervating forebodings it is consolatory to remember that they have often been needlessly sombre. What Gibbon describes as the happiest days of humanity were days when the wisest of Roman Emperors lamented that faith, reverence, and justice were dead, and that there was nothing left but to wait resignedly for the crash of a dissolving world.

During the Augustinian Era of romance and chivalry, England was covered with religious foundations, because their founders believed the country was hurrying to perdition. There have been optimistic periods, when pæans were set to a higher key. When printing had conquered back a lost territory for the mind; when Columbus presented a new world to Christendom; and when French Republicans were issuing cosmopolitan manifestoes and planting trees of liberty, society was exultant and sanguine. But neither the elation nor the despondency were justified by the results. To manfully do the work that lies nearest to us and abide the issue, is a better moral training than meditating lugubriously over joys bygone and hopes decayed.

Ancient civilisation largely consisted in art, in the frivolous work of polished idleness, and in speculative subtleness. Modern civilisation consists in physical conquests. It has enabled man to wield the elements at will, and armed him with the force of all their legions. Machinery has multiplied human power, accelerated motion, and annihilated distance. We are girt round with a zodiac of sciences that have lengthened life and have lessened pain. Chemistry has descended from its atomic altitudes and affinities, and now dyes, scours, brews, bakes, cooks, compounds drugs, and manufactures manure, with the unassuming reality of nature. "Electricity leaves her thunderbolts in the sky, and, like Mercury when dismissed from Olympus, acts as letter-carrier and message-boy." Magnetism, which was once "believed to be a living principle, quivering in the compass needle," has been divested of its mystery and set to the every-day labour of lighting streets and propelling engines. But these stupendous discoveries in the phenomenal universe are valuable chiefly because they lead to moral amendment and mental elevation. Progress implies something more than the ability to make money from these inventions to spend on our-

selves. Material prosperity alone does not satisfy the moral, intellectual, and æsthetic needs of our being. Comfort is not, as it has been well said, the *summum bonum* of men or nations. No people can be highly civilised amongst whom delectation takes the place of duty and vapid amusement of virile activity. Happiness may be our being's end and aim, but we find happiness rather in the struggle than in the enjoyment, rather in pursuing the dangling apple than in grasping it when it turns to dust. Society has higher purposes to serve than merely supplying the day's wants or amusing the day's vacuity. Emerson told his countrymen, when they were boasting of their increase of population, that the true test of civilisation was not to be found in the census papers. Nor, it might be added, in Board of Trade returns, or Budget statements, in the railways made, steamers launched, or markets opened, but in the kind of men it turns out. The Highland laird, in "A Legend of Montrose," who, on seeing six silver candlesticks in Sir Miles Musgrove's house at Edenhall, swore that he had "mair candlesticks and better candlesticks in his ain hame in the Grampians than were ever lichted in a Cumberland ha'," and backed his oath with a wager, was held to have won the bet when he illuminated his dining room with blazing torches of bog-pine, held in the hands of stalwart clansmen. "Would you dare to compare to them in value the richest ore that was ever dug out of a mine?" asked the chieftain triumphantly. He measured his wealth, not by the length of his rent-roll, but by the number of his men. The sentiment intended to be expressed by the incident is as old as history. The Greek poet struck the same note when he warned the Mytilenes that it was not in high-raised battlements or laboured mounds, in thick walls, or moated gates, but in high-spirited men that they would find their safety. Bacon re-echoed it when he told his contemporaries that well-stored

arsenals and armouries were but sheep in lions' skins unless the disposition of the people who had to use the arms were stout and brave. The refrain of Burns' immortal song, "The man's the gowd for a' that," is a homely version of the same idea. Man was made for healthful effort. Life is a battle and a march, and neither men nor nations can be successful in either if they make too much of physical comfort or doze away their days in lazy luxury. The corruption of prosperity is more to be dreaded than the responsibility of authority. There is not, as our gallant friend near me (Colonel Upcher) has said, any evidence of degeneracy in the British race. There is the old courage in war, sinew in labour, and skill in workmanship. There is the same passion for adventure and love of athletics. There is no decline either in judgment or alertness, in adaptability and constancy. The British Empire is not in solstice. The imperial ideal tempers the original iron of the British character into steel and whets its resistless edge. Its spirit and resources are equal to meeting all inevitable dangers and all honourable obligations.

But it is indispensable that we should recognise the fact that, though mighty, we are not omnipotent. Our coffers are well filled and easily replenished, but our means are not inexhaustible. Modern inventions are open to other nations as unreservedly as to ourselves. They have utilised them, and now tread closely on our heels. But this is not altogether a disadvantage. We must fight against material obstacles in order to win the means of exercising mental influence. The ancients believed that it was the interest of the country that its neighbours should be poor and weak. The moderns have discovered that it is for the welfare of a country that its contemporaries should be strong and prosperous. The successful exertion of one stimulates the other, and all share in the common well-being. Our most abiding possession is practical knowledge. It is

imperishable. Literature may dwindle to a fribble, art may degenerate into bric-a-brac, but mankind can never forget how to make steam engines and electric telegraphs, telescopes and compasses, printing presses and firearms. While they exist, barbarism from without cannot overwhelm civilised powers. But the barbarism from within may lay our splendour low. We need fear neither enemies nor rivals. The apprehension for the future comes from amongst ourselves. The secret of British success has been by combining a comprehensive attention to general interests with a scrupulous care for individual liberty. Without wrench or rupture we have transformed our institutions. Slavery, with its horrors, is at an end. Transportation, with its torments, is abandoned; and impressment, with its harshness, is discarded. We obtain our defensive forces voluntarily, by absorbing the unemployed, and not by draining our industry. Invidious privileges, unmerited disabilities, and mortifying distinctions, political, civil, and ecclesiastical, which appeared necessary only through the mists of error, or which were magnified into importance only through the medium of prejudice, have been swept away. We have striven to inspire the humble with dignity, the desponding with faith, the oppressed with hope, and the British Empire has become a model of popular liberty and personal prosperity as firm as the earth and as wide as the sea.

But, by an unaccountable infatuation, we are reforging the very restraints, the removal of which brought us such social happiness and civic success. National character is the outcome of personal character. The strength of a state can be no more than the sum of the strength of the persons who compose it. But this obvious fact is strangely overlooked. Man, too, it should be remembered, is not clay, to be moulded, or marble to be cut. He grows under the hand. The outline of to-day becomes the fetter

of to-morrow. A statute which this year embodies a fact, next year may prescribe a bondage. Wherever there is life there is movement. As Mr. Spencer has shown, we can no more elude the laws of human development than we can elude the law of gravitation. Society is a living organism, and if walled in by rigid mechanical apparatus, it cannot fail to be dwarfed and impeded in its growth. Yet under some well-meant but purblind perversity we are doing this. We are suppressing emulation, legislating all the initiative out of the people, and enervating them by perpetual state aid. Government is being substituted for the individual, and everything is being reduced to its inception. All we want is to be let alone. Let us have fewer laws and less officialism—but let us strengthen the principle of law and the spirit of justice by education, and aim at making men not machines. Then all will be well. Then our harassed industrial Titans will recover their pristine vigour and rouse themselves to higher efforts, warmer motion, keener strife. The noble ideal of plain living and high thinking, of adolescent and social energy, has been impaired by the prevailing materialism, while the disposition to throw responsibility upon events, and to drift helplessly from currents of popular caprice, is an ignoble feature of our politics. But there is still lurking in the British people sparks of the patriotic fire which burned in the hearts of the heroes who bled for our freedom and left us their fame. The spirit will mount with the occasion. Its aim is progress and its motive duty.

XVIII.—THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

Joseph Cowen's Last Message to his Fellow Citizens.

The following letter was read at a farewell supper given in the Olympia, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, to the 74th Battery of the Royal Field Artillery on the eve of their departure for South Africa.

Blaydon-on-Tyne, *Oct.* 20*th*, 1899.

Dear Mr. Fawcus,

I am sorry I cannot attend your parting repast, but I wish you good cheer and an inspiriting gathering.

Our gallant soldiers are going to support a just cause. The issue has been mystified by carping critics and jealous partizans, but it is very simple. We are fighting to prevent men of British blood from being treated as "helots" on British territory, by a sordid oligarchy which British arms saved from extinction and British generosity endowed with autonomy. We want racial equality. The Boers want racial ascendancy. That's the difference.

The action of our Government has been characterized throughout by great ability, much tact, unvarying courtesy and unexampled patience. It launched no defiance and it offered no wrong. It wanted peace but peace with freedom. The Boers, however, refused the conditions and unsheathed the sword. What they would not yield to moral they will be compelled to yield to military pressure. The brave men now about to leave us, steady, vivid, strong, will help to apply that pressure. Their record is rich in noble deeds, and the young heroes, stirred by past-battle memories, will strain to match the valour of the old.

Don't let us narrow the question to the proportion of an interest. Appeal to duty and the appeal will be responded to. The nation is alive in every fibre. There is still unquenched within the soul of all true Britons, sparks of the patriotic fire which burned in the hearts of our fathers when they were called to protect our shores against the Armada and when the Great Protector helped the weak and awed the strong. The people for whom Nelson had no other speech than the concise one, "England expects to-day every man to do his duty," have not yet been corrupted by the crooked tactics of party politicians or the enfeebling influence of material prosperity.

We are at war for the purpose of preventing our Brethren in South Africa from being taxed without representation; from being placed under the control of Courts whose Judges take their orders from a corrupt Executive; from being refused the right to carry arms while their oppressors flourish theirs with insolent brutality; from being compelled to contribute to schools in which English is treated as a foreign tongue; in short, from being denied the elementary rights of self-government in territory indubitably British. We ask no privilege for ourselves that we would not give to the Boers, but we will not submit to be ostracised and domineered over in our own dominions. We cherish no revengeful feelings. The British flag is the herald of mercy as well as might. But we will have justice for our countrymen and control of our own Empire come what may.

Believe me to be,

Dear Mr. Fawcus,

Yours truly,

Jos. Cowen.

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